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Under the Laurels, 5 acts, 2 hrs.		6 4
When the Circus Came to Town, 3 acts, 2¼ hrs.	(25c)	5 3

THE SPELL OF THE IMAGE

A COMEDY

IN A PROLOGUE AND THREE ACTS
FOR TEN MEN AND TEN WOMEN

BY

LINDSEY BARBEE

AUTHOR OF

*"After the Game," "At the End of the Rainbow," "The Call of
Wohelo," "The Dream That Came True," "The Fifteenth of
January," "Then Greek Met Greek," "Her First Scoop,"
"The Kingdom of Heart's Content," "The Promise of
Tomorrow," "Sing a Song of Seniors," "The
Thread of Destiny," "Tomorrow at Ten,"
"A Trial of Hearts," "When the Clock
Strikes Twelve," "The Whole Truth,"
"In the College Days," "Let's Pre-
tend—A Book of Children's
Plays," etc.*

TO

CELESTE LORING PORTER

AND

WILLIAM JENNINGS SCHAEZEL

"Dream Princess" and "Adventure"



CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY

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to Kitty—and learns of his enemy. Terrence is about to tell his story—when the climax comes!

ACT III.—Terrence is generous—and Carter accepts the terms. The finding of the monkey-wrench upsets auntie's nerves. Carolyn wears three roses and John becomes disorganized. "Don't its eyes seem to follow me—doesn't it seem alive?" Aunt Letitia and Aunt Alice have a lively tilt, with Phyllis as mediator. Belinda slaps the image—and the pearls are found! Kitty follows Adventure "even to the end of the day." "Here's half the cost of a wedding ring!"

STORY OF THE PLAY.

Phyllis Castleman—on the evening of her betrothal to Lord Burleigh, an English nobleman, hears the whispered word of her former lover, Rupert Huntley, as he passes her in the dance; and, escaping her guests, gives him audience. He taunts her with her faithlessness and she confesses that desire for riches and power has influenced her—that she is through with love. The prophecy of a passing gypsy mad-dens Phyllis; the mocking eyes of an image cast their spell upon her; she tears the long string of pearls, Lord Burleigh's gift, from about her neck and offers it to the image as a tribute, touching a hidden spring and hiding her treasure within the fantastic body "until a stranger hand shall find the resting place."

More than a century passes; generation after generation lives in the old Castleman home and keeps alive its traditions. Finally, two daughters of the house—Phyllis and Katherine Aldrich—find themselves with very little but family glory to live upon, and much to the dismay of an aristocratic aunt, decide to make their own way. Phyllis is a young woman of modern tendencies—as is her friend Carolyn Alexander—and she rejects the love of MacDonald Dunbar, a wealthy young fellow, because he has an aimless existence and does not measure up to her standard of a man. Goaded by her disappointment in him, MacDonald assumes control of one of his properties—a newspaper—upon which

Phyllis works as reporter, and from the first opposes Henry Carter who is the city's most influential citizen. Loss of advertising and of popular favor, delay of shipments and frequent accidents to the machinery—due to the fact that Fredericka Farr, a member of the staff is in reality working for Carter and keeping him in touch with *Clarion* affairs—result in disaster for MacDonald; and as a final blow comes the loss of his fortune. Carter attempts to buy the *Clarion* but is repulsed and in a chance conversation between him and Fredericka (which is overheard by Kitty Aldrich) the secret of his assumed name is revealed and the disclosure of a certain Donovan case is threatened. Kitty has very romantically met a young Irishman who is hunting for one who ruined his father years ago; she immediately connects the two incidents and summons the Irishman—Terrence Donovan—by telephone. Carter is proved the guilty party and though generously forgiven by Terrence, is forced to meet the *Clarion's* demands.

Belinda, a clumsy maid of the Castleman family, upsets the image, and in some way touches the hidden spring. The pearls roll out from their hiding place; Phyllis sells them and with the proceeds buys half the *Clarion*, by the aid of John Harlan, MacDonald's friend and lawyer. With an awakened love for MacDonald—who, in his altered circumstances, has vowed never again to speak of love—she turns the tables by asking him to marry her; and still remains true to her ideas of economic independence by being part owner of the paper and sharing the cost of a wedding ring. The romantic love story of Terrence and Kitty, the affair of John and Carolyn, form the sub plots of the play.

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES.

PROLOGUE.

All wear the Revolutionary costumes with powdered hair or wigs. The gypsy appears in the usual bright gypsy attire.

THE PLAY.

KITTY.—Bright, animated and enthusiastic. Wears sim-

ple little gown in Act I; street suit and hat in Act II; morning gown in first half of Act III; simple evening gown in second half of Act III.

MRS. BRECKINRIDGE—Stately, aristocratic, sentimental and overbearing at times. Wears rather elaborate gown in Act I, with old-fashioned jewelry; a simple morning gown in Act III. Hair is tinged with gray.

BELINDA—Exceedingly awkward; romantic and dreamy at times. Plain gingham dress with apron.

PHYLLIS—Self-assertive, of decided poise, and yet winsome and sweet. Tailored gown and hat in Act I; later on, evening gown, wrap, gloves, etc. Tailored gown, hat and fancy blouse in Act II. Simple house dress in first part of Act III.; simple evening or dinner gown in second part of Act III.

CAROLYN—Independent and self-reliant, especially in Act I. Sweeter and more appealing in Act III. Wears tailored suit in Act I; later on, evening gown, wrap, scarf, gloves, etc. In Act III, she wears a simple morning gown.

MRS. VAN ALSTYNE—Brusque, worldly, matter-of-fact, and straight to the point. Elaborate evening gown and coat in Act I; dressy street costume for Act III. Gray hair.

FREDERICKA—Dashing and clever. Wears a very attractive and stylish street suit and hat, fancy blouse.

MACDONALD—Indifferent and aimless in Act I; very energetic, business-like and manly during the rest of the play. Evening clothes in Act I; business suit in Acts II and III.

JOHN—Dignified and forceful. Evening clothes in Act I; business suit in Acts II and III.

TERRENCE—Fascinating and persuasive. Motoring costume in Act I; business suit in Acts II and III. Overcoat.

TED—Very important. Knickerbockers.

LESTER—Quiet and business-like. Business suit.

BURTON—Excitable. Business suit.

CARTER—Middle-aged, bombastic, assertive and accustomed to his own way. Business suit. Overcoat in last act.

PROPERTIES.

PROLOGUE—Tapestries, candles, mirrors, etc. Stand with image. Wine glasses for guests. String of pearls for Phyllis. The image should be striking in appearance. If not easily obtained, one can be made of clay.

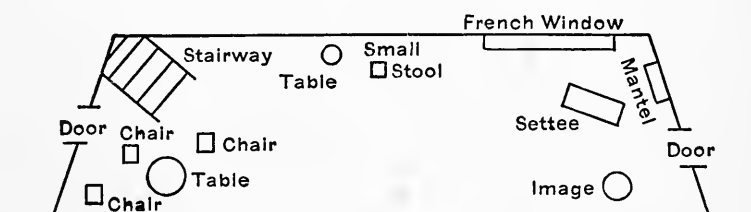
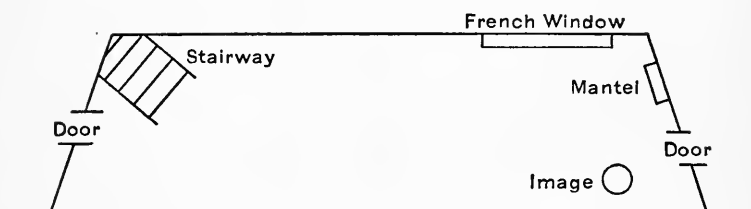
ACT I—Table with books, vase and telephone. Monkey-wrench for table drawer. Settee; mantel with clock, candlesticks, etc.; three chairs and small stool; rugs for stair and floor; portrait; stand with image; small table with vase of flowers; pillows for settee; button for electric light; bell and auto horn for off stage; Lorgnettes for Mrs. Breckinridge and Mrs. Van Alstyne. Bill, cup, and papers for Belinda. Shabby coat, hat and gloves for Kitty. Wrist watch, evening coat and gloves for Phyllis. Evening coat, gloves and scarf for Carolyn. Cap and visiting card for Terrence.

ACT II—Desk with telephone, papers, etc. Three office chairs. Hat tree with several hats and a cap. Two stands with typewriters and typewriter chairs. Window blind. Copy for Lester. Papers for Burton. Papers for MacDonald. Detective book for Ted. Hat, coat, note-book, powder case with puff for Fredericka. Note-books, hats and coats for Kitty and Phyllis. Note and cap and gloves for Terrence. Auto horn for off stage.

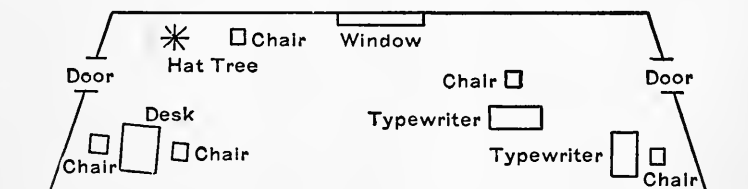
ACT III—Settings same as Act I. Note, monkey-wrench, cap and gloves for Terrence. Box of roses for Carolyn. Coat for Kitty. Lorgnettes for Mrs. Breckinridge and Mrs. Van Alstyne. Cap for Ted. Hat and overcoat for Carter. Pearls and pocket book with money for Phyllis. Auto horn for off stage. Bandage for MacDonald's hand.

STAGE SETTING.

Acts I and III.



ACT II.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R. 3 E.*, right entrance, up stage, etc.; *R. D.*, right door; *L. D.*, left door; *D. F.*, door in flat, or scene running across the back of the stage; up stage, away from the footlights; down stage, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

THE SPELL OF THE IMAGE

PROLOGUE.

SCENE: *Room in the Castleman manor house. Practical doors at R. and L. 2 E. To R. of C. is a winding stairway; L. of C., an open French window, revealing landscape beyond. Mantel down L. Settings appropriate to the period—and catching the eye, especially, on account of its incongruity, is a hideous foreign image at L. 2 E. The curtain rises on the gay dancers as they group around the host who stands on the stairway, with his daughter a few steps above him and Lord Burleigh at her right. Each guest holds a tiny glass filled with a sparkling liquid.*

THE HOST. A toast, friends, ere the music starts again! Drink deep to the future happiness of my daughter and Lord Burleigh, whose betrothal you celebrate tonight. (*Raises glass.*) A pledge to beauty and bravery—to a winsome maid and a gallant knight—to England and America!

ALL. England and America! (*They clink glasses and drink the toast. An attendant maid enters at R. places the glasses on a large silver tray and bears them from the room.*)

THE HOST (*motioning off stage to musicians*). Play on!

To the sound of slow music, off stage, a Minuet is danced. As the last strains die away, the dancers pass out two by two, by stairway. Stage clear for a moment; then RUPERT enters through French window. He stands irresolute and expectant and as if in answer to his unspoken thought, PHYLLIS comes down stairway.

PHYLLIS (*as she gazes nervously about*). Why did you ask me to do this? I should be with my guests.

RUPERT (*ironically*). And with Lord Burleigh? (*Comes down L. to front of stage.*)

PHYLLIS (*coldly*). With Lord Burleigh, if it pleases you to put it that way. (*Comes down stage to R. 2 E.*)

RUPERT. If so—why did you heed my whispered word as I passed you in the dance?

PHYLLIS (*proudly*). I—I would plead my cause.

RUPERT (*with sarcasm*). And why should the future Lady Burleigh choose to plead her cause with a mere—dreamer?

PHYLLIS. Because dreams may not be weighed in the scales of this workaday world.

RUPERT. Lest the beam tip in favor of gold, lands and titles?

PHYLLIS. My father decrees that I wed with Lord Burleigh. I am a dutiful daughter.

RUPERT (*leaning forward*). But what does your heart decree?

PHYLLIS. What right have you to ask me that?

RUPERT. The right that you have given me. (*Starts toward her.*)

PHYLLIS (*raising her hand*). Rupert! Not a step nearer! I have made my choice—I have weighed the consequences—I am through with love.

RUPERT (*at C.*). And through with me. (*Gazes steadily at her.*)

PHYLLIS. Through with you. (*Forgetting herself.*) Oh, Rupert, Rupert! Don't look at me like that. (*Comes to him.*) See—I am dropping my mask, I am showing you my heart—I am telling you that my love is yours!

RUPERT. And yet—

PHYLLIS (*impulsively*). I cannot go away with you into a strange, wild country. I cannot endure hardships; I cannot do without the beautiful things that make life worth while. I'm vain, selfish, superficial. I'm a coward—a coward! (*Turns away.*)

RUPERT (*after a moment*). And this is what your promise meant! (*Passionately.*) Love! (*Points.*) Why even the grinning image there is mocking you! See his wicked smile—feel his demon eyes! (*She turns again to him.*)

PHYLLIS (*drawing away*). You frighten me!

RUPERT (*catching her arm*). Come closer—closer!

(*Pulls her to image.*) For this is the deity who will rule the little mimic world which you have chosen! He will dwarf you with false values, he will blind you with fleeting splendors—he will be remorseless in the tribute that he asks, cruel in the sacrifice that he demands! Look at him—look at him!

The GYPSY appears at the open window. She enters and comes close behind them.

PHYLLIS (*hiding her eyes*). I will not look—I—(*Breaks away.*)

GYPSY (*coming between them*). Cross my hand with silver, pretty lady, and I'll tell ye what the future holds.

PHYLLIS (*recovering herself*). Whence come you, gypsy girl? (*The Gypsy silently and smilingly points out the open window, then stretches her hand beseechingly toward PHYLLIS.*)

GYPSY (*whispering*). I'll tell ye what the future holds.

PHYLLIS (*haughtily*). I know already what the future holds. (*Points to window.*) Begone!

GYPSY. Heed not the wedding bells that call you across the sea, pretty lady. For the hearts under bodices of lace and velvet are cruel and treacherous; the smile that wreaths a courtier's face may mask a deadly purpose; the hand that plies a fan may hold a dagger. (*Looks toward RUPERT.*) Hold on to love, pretty lady, hold on to love.

PHYLLIS. Begone, I tell you!

GYPSY (*touching the long string of pearls which hangs around PHYLLIS' neck*). Frozen tears—frozen tears!

PHYLLIS (*shrinking*). What do you mean?

GYPSY. Tears for what might have been—touched by the icy finger of the years that are to be!

PHYLLIS (*moving to R. & E.*). I will not listen to you. (*Stamps foot.*) Away! Away! (*GYPSY retreats to window.*)

GYPSY. Then read what is written in the stars. (*Pauses—then with her eyes fixed upon the heavens, she chants.*) When years and years have passed into the realm of yesterday—when the splendor of courts has faded into nothingness, when you, yourself, pretty lady, are gone and forgot-

ten—there will burst the strong, white light of another age—an age, wherein there will come one who bears your name. But she will be strong—not weak; fearless, not cowardly; loyal—not false. (*Pauses.*) See—it is written in the stars! (*Points. She steps through the window and goes off singing a rollicking gypsy song. PHYLLIS and RUPERT listen as if spellbound until the sound dies away. RUPERT crosses to her.*)

RUPERT (*touching the pearls*). His gift?

PHYLLIS (*mechanically*). His gift.

RUPERT (*bitterly*). Chains! Fetters!

PHYLLIS (*tearing them from her neck*). Never! Never! A curse upon them! (*Crosses to L.*)

RUPERT. Aye, and an evil spell which the gypsy wove.

PHYLLIS (*holding the necklace at arm's length*). Then I'll not wear them—and the evil spell will be broken. (*Wildly.*) They shall not threaten my happiness—nay, nor words of yours—nor gypsy prattle—for I'll wed Lord Burleigh—I'll wed Lord Burleigh! (*She starts toward the window as if she would cast the pearls from her—then hesitates—and rushes to the image.*) So you ask a penance, you evil spirit—a tribute! Here—here—I give it gladly. (*Hangs pearls about neck of image.*) I ask only for the gold, the jewels, the lands and the beautiful things that will bring me happiness. You shall have the pearls—and—(*suddenly*) I'll hide them—hide them—and no one will even know—and I shall never tell. (*Takes pearls from neck of image.*) They shall be for your own—your own—(*eagerly searches for the spring*)—where is the spring, the hidden spring—(*as she finds it.*) Ah! (*Pushes pearls into the aperture and seals it again.*) Lie there my ill-starred beauties, for your power is broken—your menace is gone! Lie there through all the dark ages that are to come, until perchance—a stranger hand shall find your resting place. Now, I am free—free—free! (*As the sound of voices and revelry comes nearer, she crosses to RUPERT at R. 2 E.*) Our tryst is over—our dream is ended—and tomorrow, we shall be as strangers. (*Takes his hand.*) Let love die to soft

music. (*As the dancers enter.*) Father; I have my cavalier for the dance. He begs to tread a measure—with Lady Burleigh!

(A MINUET and—)

CURTAIN.

ACT I.

SCENE: *Same as PROLOGUE, the settings relieved by modern touches. Small table with flowers at C. in F. Stool L. of table. Large table with books, vase and telephone down R. Large chairs R. and back of table. Chair R. 2 E. Large portrait of PHYLLIS CASTLEMAN, LADY BURLEIGH, hung at R. 2 E. Image at L. 2 E. Mantel with clock, candlesticks, etc., down L. Settee with pillows L. of C. Rugs for stairway and floor. Electric light button by door at L. 2 E.*

As the curtain rises there comes the sound of an electric bell. After a moment, KITTY tiptoes quietly down the stairway and stands irresolute. Bell sounds again, this time more prolonged and emphatic. BELINDA appears at door at R. and KITTY motions her to be quiet. Again the bell—and MRS. BRECKINRIDGE comes to the top of the stairway. Again the pantomime. They stand in this way for a few moments, then KITTY tiptoes to the window and peers cautiously out.

KITTY (*with evident relief*). He's gone! (*Turns.*)

MRS. B. Who's gone?

KITTY. The butcher. (*BELINDA moves to C.*)

MRS. B. The butcher? (*Trails majestically down the stairs.*) And is it customary for the butcher to try the front door? (*Crosses to chair at R. of table.*)

KITTY. Only when he can't get in at the back door. He's tried twice today.

MRS. B. (*seating herself.*) But why don't you answer the bell?

KITTY. For the simple reason that it's the first of the month, dear auntie. (*Seats herself on settee.*)

BELINDA. Do you reckon it's one of them bills, Miss Kitty?

KITTY. It's quite possible. Suppose you look, Belinda. (*Exit BELINDA at L. 2 E.*)

MRS. B. May I ask if you are in the habit of discussing our financial situation with Belinda?

KITTY. Mercy, yes! Belinda is familiar with the rattle of each and every family skeleton.

MRS. B. (*haughtily*). The Castlemans have never made equals of their servants, Katherine.

KITTY. The Castlemans probably believed in wages. You must remember that at present we're giving Belinda only moral support.

As BELINDA enters at L. 2 E.

KITTY. Well, Belinda?

BELINDA (*holding out envelope*). Maybe, 'taint a bill, Miss Kitty. It's awful thin like.

KITTY (*taking it*). That doesn't mean anything, Belinda: a death warrant may be signed with a mere stroke of the pen. (*Opens envelope, glances at contents and sighs.*) Thank goodness!

MRS. B. (*anxiously*). What does it say?

KITTY. Oh, I didn't read it—I just looked for red ink. When a bill has no red ink, I never take it seriously. (*Throws it aside.*)

MRS. B. Now, Katherine, suppose you explain all these mysterious performances.

KITTY. There's nothing at all mysterious, auntie.

MRS. B. Dodging bills, I should call decidedly strange—

KITTY. Not if you're minus a bank account.

MRS. B. (*impressively*). A Castleman—(*suddenly remembering BELINDA who stands back of KITTY listening.*) You may go, Belinda.

BELINDA (*startled*). Yes'm. (*In her embarrassment, she turns suddenly, trips, and makes her way blunderingly toward the door at R. where she pauses.*) And must I be saying anything for Miss Phyllis and Miss Carol?

KITTY. Not a thing, Belinda. They'll have dinner in the

city. (*Exit BELINDA at R. and a terrific clatter immediately follows. KITTY starting up*). Good gracious!

BELINDA (*opening door and peeping in*). 'Taint nothin', Miss Kitty—just the carpet sweeper got in my way. (*Exit R.*)

MRS. B. (*as KITTY seats herself*). If I may suggest, Katherine—clumsiness is hardly an asset to a maid of all work.

KITTY. Don't be hard on Belinda—for everybody has an excess of *something*. Why *you* have too much ancestry (*MRS. B. protests*), you know you have; Phyl has too much independence; I have too much tongue. So let's not blame Belinda for just too much feet.

MRS. B. Suppose we come back to the subject of finances?

KITTY (*sighing*). How can we come back to what is always with us?

MRS. B. Is what you say about the bank account true?

KITTY. I'm sorry—but it is. Our income at the present moment consists of the money from Carol's board.

MRS. B. Why haven't you told me? I knew of course that there were—economics—but I did not dream of—*this*.

KITTY (*rising and crossing to chair back of table*). When you came to live with us, auntie, Phyl and I vowed that you should never be worried with our affairs. Now that we are down to our last penny, it becomes necessary to tell you. (*Sits.*)

MRS. B. Of course, my dear, what I have is for you and Phyllis to—

KITTY (*firmly*). No, no auntie—most decidedly *no*. What's yours is yours—and what's ours, we must make.

MRS. B. (*sharply*). Make! How?

KITTY. By work—of course.

MRS. B. What do you intend to do?

KITTY. Anything we can.

MRS. B. (*plaintively*). The Castlemans have *never* gone out to service.

KITTY. Well, I don't think we intend to do exactly—*that*—auntie.

MRS. B. The daughters have never made their own living.

KITTY. Maybe they weren't forced to do so.

MRS. B. (*with dignity*). If it proved necessary, they did it secretly as gentlewomen should.

KITTY. Then I'm thinking there was something radically wrong with their spinal columns.

MRS. B. We, as a family, have always held that sending a girl into the world of business is like rubbing the bloom from a peach.

KITTY. Then, auntie, the modern age has a lot of blighted peaches on its hands.

MRS. B. (*sternly*). Don't joke, Katherine. It's no joking matter—it's—(*with decision*)—well, you can't do it, that's all.

KITTY (*rising*). But we *can* do it—and what's more, we *will*. For your sake, Aunt Alice, we've stayed quietly at home and have fooled the public. Now we intend to be independent.

MRS. B. (*angrily*). Carolyn has been giving you these ideas.

KITTY. Phyl and I don't need to be given what we already have. And when you look at splendid, well-poised, capable Carol, I should think you'd be proud to have us just like her.

MRS. B. (*fretfully*). Phyllis has her writing— isn't that enough?

KITTY (*seating herself again*). Occasional checks and avalanches of returned manuscripts? Hardly.

MRS. B. But it's such a refined work—and if she signs another name to what she writes, nobody can find out that she's earning money.

KITTY. Too slow a route to bread and butter.

MRS. B. Then why doesn't she marry young Dunbar?

KITTY (*pounding table*). Stop right there, auntie—

that's Phyl's affair and we have no more right to discuss it than we have to open her mail.

MRS. B. (*sarcastically*). Then, perhaps, you'll tell me what *you* expect to do.

KITTY. I'm hoping to persuade Mr. Gorman to make me his private secretary.

MRS. B. (*aghast*). Frank Gorman?

KITTY (*in surprise*). The same. What's the matter with him?

MRS. B. His mother was a washerwoman!

KITTY. No wonder then that he's such a nice, clean, respectable man!

MRS. B. But a *washerwoman*!

KITTY (*reflectively*). How proud she must be to know that he's so successful in business!

MRS. B. He's often brought the clothes to the Castleman's back door.

KITTY (*emphatically*). Which fact alone should swing open the Castleman's front door to him.

MRS. B. (*warningly*). Blood will tell—

KITTY. Even to the extent of telling what it shouldn't.

MRS. B. (*rising and standing before portrait*). What *would* your ancestress, Phyllis Castleman, think?

KITTY. If you don't mind my speaking plainly, Aunt Alice, I don't give a hang what she thinks. I hate her—so does Phyl—simpering, silly thing!

MRS. B. (*angrily*). Katherine! How dare you! (*Reverently.*) She married a lord! (*Seats herself again.*)

KITTY (*disgustedly*). Don't I know it! 'Twas told me I think, while I was in the cradle!

MRS. B. (*plaintively*). Oh, Katherine—if you would only settle down!

KITTY (*rising, crossing and picking up the bill*). Settling up is more to my fancy right at present.

MRS. B. (*hesitatingly*). I wonder if Mrs. Van Alstyne—

KITTY (*firmly*). Now, Aunt Alice! Just because she's father's sister and has married a rich old codger is no reason that she should be responsible for Phyl and me—

MRS. B. But she has no children—

KITTY. And we don't care to apply for the position. Why I should think your Castleman blood would run cold at the very suggestion of such a thing.

MRS. B. (*complacently*). Of course, Katherine, it *was* a condescension for your mother to marry into the Aldrich family. Your father was a good man,—but—(*hesitates*).

KITTY (*at C.*). Auntie, your *buts* always make me want to swear!

MRS. B. (*shocked*). My dear! How can you express yourself in such a way! The Castlemans never show emotion. In many respects, Katherine, you are very much like your father.

KITTY (*stamping*). I'm glad of it! He has just as much right to be represented as the Castlemans.

MRS. B. (*after a pause*). Dear me! I don't seem to be able to think of any alternative.

KITTY (*thoughtfully, as she walks to settee*). Of course we can sell the house—but it's old-fashioned and so far from the city that it wouldn't bring much. (*Stands back of settee.*)

MRS. B. (*forgetting her accustomed dignity in her agitation*). Sell the house! Sell the house that has been the home of the Castlemans for a century? Oh, my dear—you can't mean *that*! Why, every little nook is filled with the perfume of Yesterday; every room is peopled with the ghosts of the Past; the very air is quivering with the lullabies, the love songs and the plaintive melodies of Memory. The dim chambers have known birth, love, death; the winding passages breathe the fragrance of lavender and roses; even the door opens to the road of dead years which leads to the Land of Long Ago!

KITTY (*impulsively, rushing to her*). Oh auntie—I was only talking—we shall never sell it—*never*! We were born here—we've grown up here—and—(*whimsically*) it looks very much as if we'd die here!

At this moment the bell rings. KITTY starts toward door—then hesitates. BELINDA emerges from R. wiping a cup—trips and drops the cup which breaks.

KITTY. *Sh!*

BELINDA (*in a loud whisper*). 'Taint one of the good cups, Miss Kitty. It's got two nicks and the handle's off.

(*Bell sounds again in three sharp rings.*)

KITTY (*relieved*). That's Phyl. Never mind, Belinda, I'll open the door.

Exit BELINDA reluctantly at R. after gathering up the fragments. KITTY hastily withdraws to outer hall at L. 2 E. and re-enters almost immediately, ushering in PHYLLIS and CAROLYN.

KITTY. Why didn't you give your ring at first? How did I know but that the sheriff was camping on the doorstep? (*Draws PHYLLIS aside to L. as CAROLYN joins MRS. BRECKINRIDGE.*) What luck?

PHYLLIS. None so far. The *Star* doesn't need another reporter—so tomorrow, I'll try the *Clarion*.

KITTY. Well—the Rubicon is crossed. (*Motions toward MRS. B.*) I've told her.

PHYLLIS. How did she take it?

KITTY. Just as we expected.

PHYLLIS. Then I'll cheer her up a bit. (*Hurries to MRS. B.*) Aunt Alice, what do you think? Carol and I are doing society tonight. In fact, we listen to the Symphony from the sacred enclosure of the Van Alstyne box! (*Perches on arm of chair back of table.*)

KITTY. Me too? (*Drops on settee.*)

CAROLYN (*standing at MRS. B.'s right*). It was subtly but definitely intimated, my dear, that we were to be the only guests.

KITTY. That suits me all right. I don't understand symphonies any more than you and Phyl and the rest of the audience.—(*They protest.*) Oh you *don't* understand them, you know you don't—and I'm mercifully delivered from the strenuous task of trying to look enthralled when, in truth, I'd rather be at the nearest movie.

PHYLLIS. But auntie—aren't you glad we're to be frivolous?

MRS. B. (*mournfully*). Very glad, my dear. It's probably your last opportunity—for after you begin to go out to service, the portals of society will be closed to you.

PHYLLIS (*laughingly*). Oh, surely it won't be so bad as all that. Why, I'm a Castleman!

MRS. B. You might just as well be an Aldrich without the Castleman, if you can't continue to live as a lady.

PHYLLIS. Come now, Aunt Alice, that's ridiculous. I intend to make my living and still be just as much of a lady as—(*looking up at the picture*) the other Phyllis.

MRS. B. In the Castleman lexicon, my dear, the words *lady* and *new woman* are not synonymous.

CAROLYN (*sitting on arm of MRS. B.'s chair*). Now, dear lady, are you sure that you know just who the new woman is? Don't you think of her as a terrible creature who indulges in a fatal frankness of speech—who is quite heedless of the proprieties—who places camaraderie with men on a masculine basis—and who braves an occasional cigarette?

MRS. B. (*severely*). How can I think of her in any other way, Carolyn?

CAROLYN. Well she is *one* type, I admit—but we're the other type—and we believe that the modern girl not only cherishes the beautiful inheritances of her grandmothers but also holds out her hand for the splendid gifts which the present age offers. Don't you understand?

MRS. B. I can't say that I do.

PHYLLIS. Well, you wouldn't care to see us, today, wearing the styles of 1860 would you? It's the same principle—for the ideas of a half century ago do not fit in with present day conditions.

KITTY. Speaking of clothes, reminds me that you'd better be adorning yourself for the sacrifice. The Dowager Van Alstyne doesn't care to be kept waiting.

PHYLLIS (*glancing at her watch*). Lots of time, Kit—but we'll take your advice just the same. (*Gathers up her belongings.*) Come on Carol and (*patting MRS. B.'s shoul-*

der) auntie, it's dear of you to be so sweet about my plans and to encourage me so. It makes my work twice as easy.

MRS. B. (*wiping her eyes*). And just what *is* your work, Phyllis? (CAROLYN *stands on stairway*.)

PHYLLIS. Tonight my fate is in the hands of the gods—but tomorrow, they'll toss me an entrance ticket to the world of journalism.

MRS. B. You can't deceive *me* Phyllis. I know deep in my heart that you intend to be just a plain, everyday reporter.

PHYLLIS. Everyday? Yes. But *plain*—oh, auntie how could you?

MRS. B. I don't feel like indulging in repartee, Phyllis. It's been a very trying evening, and—(*weeps*).

PHYLLIS (*helping her to rise*). There, there, Aunt Alice. Come along and help us dress. (MRS. B. and PHYLLIS *follow CAROLYN up the stairs*.) Pretend that it's a ceremonial ball and that the Castleman daughters are to set the pace.

KITTY. Phyl? (*Goes to foot of stairs*.)

PHYLLIS (*turning*). Yes?

KITTY. How'll I ever land a job if I appear in that dowdy old winter coat?

PHYLLIS. Wait until my first check and—

KITTY (*impatiently*). Wait, nothing! Maybe the Dowager will help me out.

PHYLLIS (*losing her balance*). Katherine Aldrich! Don't you dare to ask her!

KITTY. Don't fall off the stairway in your agitation. I don't intend to say a word to her—(*to herself as she comes down C.*) but I'll get it just the same. (*Exeunt MRS. B., PHYLLIS and CAROLYN up stairway*.)

KITTY *takes a book and drops listlessly into chair back of table*. After a moment, BELINDA opens the door at R. cautiously, peers around and hurries to KITTY.

BELINDA (*pulling a paper from under her apron*). It was the Earl, Miss Kitty, just as we said it was!

KITTY (*tossing aside her book*). How perfectly splendid! (*Moves chair L. of table.*)

BELINDA (*at R. of table*). An' when he had shot down ev'ry one of them robber pirates, he sprung upon a fi'ry charger what pranced him right up to the haunted house. *Bang* went the Earl upon the front door an' *bang* again. An' before he knowed what he was doin' he seen the face of his hated rival. "Where is the Lady Gwendoline?" sez the Earl in a voice of thunder, "Where is the Lady Gwendoline? For her an' her only shall be my bride!" (*Reads from paper.*) An' the rest of this thrillin' an' fascinatin' romance will be found in the next number of the *Homeside Companion*!

KITTY. Wonderful!

BELINDA. Ain't it tho'? (*Dreamily.*) An' the Lady Gwendoline had gold hair, sapphire eyes, ruby lips an' pearl teeth!

KITTY. What a jewel of a girl!

BELINDA. An' somethin' excitin' happened to her ev'ry single day. (*Pauses.*) Miss Kitty?

KITTY. Yes.

BELINDA. Do you think anythin' excitin' will ever happen to me?

KITTY. I'm sure of it. Something beautiful and mysterious happens to everybody some time or other.

BELINDA (*at front of table, facing audience*). But a orphan don't stand much chance an' when you don't see nothin' but pots, pans an' kettles, it sorter makes you feel discouraged like. An' I ain't got gold hair an' sapphire eyes an' ruby mouth an' pearl teeth.

KITTY (*rising and crossing to her*). I know just how you feel, Belinda—for I feel that way myself and if I didn't believe that there was something back of *my* pots, pans and kettles, I'd—well—I just couldn't stand it.

BELINDA. Honest, Miss Kitty?

KITTY. Honest, Belinda. (*Whispers.*) I'm romantic—*there!* I've never told it to anybody but you and nobody suspects.

BELINDA. I'll never tell, Miss Kitty, an' I'll just go on believin' that somethin' wonderful is goin' to happen to you an' to me. (*Anxiously.*) You ain't got no hidden secret, Miss Kitty?

KITTY. Not a bit of a one. But the house has.

BELINDA. This house?

KITTY (*dramatically*). This very house. Somewhere—and nobody knows just where, *she (motioning to picture)* hid a string of pearls—long, long ago. Years and years and years have passed—but some day they'll be found!

BELINDA (*in an agony of excitement*). Here? *Here?* Oh Miss Kitty ev'ry mornin' now I'll be thinkin' that maybe I'll find them pearls. Ain't it thrillin'?

KITTY. And mysterious? Didn't I tell you that we don't have to live in an everyday world unless we choose? (*Telephone rings. KITTY turns to it and BELINDA looks cautiously around, hunting for pearls.*) Yes? Oh, hello, Mac! They're here now but they're going to the Symphony.—Oh, not right away.—No, I'm doing the Cinderella stunt—wasn't sufficiently urged, to be quite frank.—Of course, they want to see you—well come for a little while then.—Three minutes?—Well, don't speed. Farewell. (*Hangs up receiver, crosses to foot of stairway and calls.*) Mac and Jack are on the way—will be here in three minutes. Hurry on down.

BELINDA (*pointing to image*). I'm scared of him—see how his eyes shine.

KITTY. He used to scare me—but one day I turned the tables and slapped him. *Now*, he behaves himself.

BELINDA (*crossing slowly to image*). I'm 'most 'fraid to dust him.

KITTY. Nonsense. Slap him every time you pass—and that'll help.

BELINDA (*reluctantly*). Well, I'll be goin' Miss Kitty—(*Turns toward door at R.*)

KITTY. Pleasant dreams to you.

BELINDA. An' may somethin' real excitin' happen to you—tonight! (*Walks slowly to R.*)

KITTY. Not much chance for tonight, Belinda, but here's thanking you just the same.

Exit BELINDA—a great noise follows; she pushes her head in the doorway.

BELINDA. 'Taint nothin' but the step-ladder, Miss Kitty. It didn't hurt. (*Exits R.*)

CAROLYN and PHYLLIS, *in evening gowns, come slowly down the steps, and make a deep curtsy before KITTY.*

PHYLLIS and CAROLYN. How do we look?

KITTY (*critically*). You'll do. (*To CAROLYN.*) *Shades of a hipless yesterday, Carol—ain't you that beruffled? (Turns to PHYLLIS.)* And as to you, Phyl—well, there's more or less of lace, little or nothing of chiffon—and a great deal of imagination. (*Bell rings.*) There are the boys! Shall I play maid? (*PHYLLIS moves R. of table—CAROLYN stands L. of table.*)

KITTY *goes out L. 2 E. and immediately ushers in MACDONALD and JOHN.*

KITTY. Sure and the young ladies are just that crazy to see you, being that they're dolled up in their glad rags! (*Seats herself on stool at back of stage.*)

MACDONALD (*shaking hands with CAROLYN*). Hail to the emancipators of the Weak and Timid Sex! (*Takes PHYLLIS' hand.*)

JOHN (*doing same*). And to the fair examples of the new femininity—greetings!

PHYLLIS. Fortunately, the new femininity does not need gentlemen of leisure to act as analysts, interpreters, apologists or critics. Sit down—both of you—and try to appreciate the situation. (*Sits R. of table with CAROLYN L. of table.*)

MACDONALD (*sitting at R. 2 E.*). We do appreciate the situation—it's dazzling! (*JOHN crosses and sits on settee.*)

CAROLYN. When will you learn, Mr. MacDonald Dunbar that compliments are not at all necessary to the welfare of the young woman with modern tendencies?

MACDONALD. When? *Never*. Show me the fair maid to whom a compliment is a bore—and—

KITTY (*quickly*). You'll swallow your words? Don't. They might be indigestible.

MRS. B. (*from above*). Katherine! Will you come here just a moment?

KITTY (*rising*). Yes, auntie. (*To the others.*) When you're through wrangling, I'll be the dove of peace and descend. (*Exit up stairway.*)

PHYLLIS. Were you at political headquarters today, Jack? I thought I saw you surrounded by a constituency of excited section hands.

JOHN. You did!

CAROLYN. Running for office—or merely proffering legal advice?

JOHN. Neither. I'm just interested in politics—politics, pure and simple.

PHYLLIS. Dear me! I didn't know that politics could be pure—and they certainly haven't the reputation of being simple.

MACDONALD. Tell what we're doing, Jack.

PHYLLIS (*quickly*). *We?* So you're in it, too! How do you like the role of busy bee?

MACDONALD. So well that, in time, I hope to sting as well as you.

CAROLYN (*hastily*). Don't mind the interruption, Jack—but go on with the story.

JOHN. Well, we're supporting the candidate who is running against Carter.

CAROLYN. You can't possibly win over Carter—he's by far the most prominent man in the city and controls most of the votes.

MACDONALD. Also most of the corruption. Granting all this, we still intend to give him a run for his money.

PHYLLIS. In a way, he's a good citizen, isn't he? Subscribes liberally to charities, is public spirited, and has built up his perfectly good department store through his own efforts.

JOHN. That's the trouble. He expands in all directions, smoothly and quietly handles the political boss of the district—and we can't find a definite thing against him.

PHYLLIS. He's a comparatively new resident, isn't he? Where was his former home?

MACDONALD. That's just it. We don't know—we can't find out—and if we *could*, we'd doubtless discover a flaw in his spotless past.

CAROLYN (*mockingly*). Politics—pure and simple!

JOHN. Then why don't you two enter the arena and show us a thing or two?

CAROLYN. Perhaps we shall—in time. The qualities which make for leadership, strength and combativeness are strong in the American woman.

PHYLLIS. And, I may add that the American woman will inevitably win suffrage—because the world needs her peculiar gifts and her special abilities.

CAROLYN. Why the vote in itself is no end. But to serve the community in our own way is the goal toward which we are all striving.

MACDONALD (*rising and crossing to L.*). Perhaps all this self-assertiveness, this independence is due to the good nature of us American men.

CAROLYN. Oh, no, it isn't. It's an inheritance from those days when our great grandmothers shared all hardships and dangers with men. These same great grandmothers weren't merely models of domesticity as they are represented; they were strong-willed, efficient, with an unquenchable spirit. I resent the tales of their docility, their helplessness and their gentle forbearance.

KITTY *descends the stairs.*

JOHN (*looking up at her*). Descend, oh, dove of peace—we need you! (*Rises.*)

KITTY. I thought you would—also the good coffee I'll soon have ready in the dining room. Come along! (*Exit at R.*)

JOHN (*offering his arm to CAROLYN*). Shall we? (*She rises.*)

CAROLYN (*as they move off*). If I were cruel enough to say *no*, which would win—the coffee or I? (*They pass out at R., PHYLLIS starts to follow them, MACDONALD crosses quickly and holds her back.*)

PHYLLIS (*in surprise*). Well?

MACDONALD. Phyl, is it true that you've applied for a position on the *Star*?

PHYLLIS. It is. Who keeps you so splendidly informed of my movements?

MACDONALD. Please don't do it, Phyl—please let me take care of you.

PHYLLIS. Oh Mac, *Mac*—must we go all through with *that*, again? It's so useless.

MACDONALD. Not half so useless as your struggling along when I have money going to waste and a heart that's been waiting for you—since we were kids together.

PHYLLIS. You don't understand, do you—or is it that you *won't*? Now listen. I don't want anyone to take care of me—for I prefer to take care of myself. I don't care to marry, and if I *did*, I shouldn't marry you. Is it clear?

MACDONALD (*resting on edge of table*). Clear, but not final. Do you object to telling me just why I don't qualify?

PHYLLIS. Not in the least. The first reason is the fact that I don't love you—in the way you wish.

MACDONALD. I'll make you. Try me and see. (*Takes her hand.*)

PHYLLIS (*withdrawing it*). And thereby lose the very good friend who has always meant so much to me? No, MacDonald, no.

MACDONALD (*grimly*). Go on. (*Crosses to L.*)

PHYLLIS. Then—as I've said before—I don't believe that any woman should be a financial burden to her husband. (*Seats herself R. of table.*)

MACDONALD (*seating himself L. of table*). Financial fiddlesticks! Do you suppose any self-respecting husband will allow his wife to be—economically independent?

PHYLLIS. I can't answer for the self-respecting husband but that is what every self-respecting wife will demand.

MACDONALD. Tommyrot!

PHYLLIS. Oh, sneer if you wish—but, before long, you'll be forced to acknowledge that economic independence is a domestic problem that overshadows a multitude of others; a problem whose solution is not yet clearly realized.

MACDONALD (*sighing*). Thank heaven for any delay.

PHYLLIS. Marriage should be a partnership—financially and intellectually.

MACDONALD. Even to equal responsibility in the payment of the grocery bill, I suppose.

PHYLLIS. I am dealing in broad generalities, Mac.

MACDONALD. Which are theoretical, not practical. Well—fire away.

PHYLLIS. I don't want my husband—that is, of course,—if I should ever marry—for of course I don't want to marry—but if I should—

MACDONALD. I get you.

PHYLLIS. To regard me merely as one who must be supported. I desire that my intelligence and my capabilities shall be used—in conjunction with his—for a common object.

MACDONALD. Has it ever dawned upon you that the aforesaid intelligence and capabilities might be used in the home?

PHYLLIS. The home is always the first consideration. But—on the other hand—woman's work will never assume dignity and importance until it is measured and compensated.

MACDONALD. I don't know what you mean—neither do you—so let's pass on to the next pleasant point.

PHYLLIS. Well, a very serious obstacle is the fact that you're good for nothing.

MACDONALD (*angrily*). Look here, Phyl—a man can't take everything. (*Rises.*)

PHYLLIS (*calmly*). You asked me for reasons. I'm giving them.

MACDONALD. Are you insinuating that I don't work?

PHYLLIS. Cutting coupons I shouldn't call *strenuous* exercise.

MACDONALD. Looking after my interests requires time and—pardon my presumption—brains! (*Leans over table.*)

PHYLLIS. They're not really your interests, Mac—your father started them for you and left them for your benefit.

MACDONALD. I don't see your point. (*Seats himself again.*)

PHYLLIS. You don't know the joy of creation—the power of struggle—the glory of achievement. Things have been made so very, very easy for you.

MACDONALD. How am I responsible for that? What chance have I had—here?

PHYLLIS. The same chance that helped your father build a splendid fortune—that made him a civic power—that brought him the lofty position which his son should now be occupying.

MACDONALD. The town could never mean to me what it did to dad, Phyl.

PHYLLIS (*leaning forward*). But it *should* mean as much, —and indifference has been your greatest mistake, Mac. You came back from your exclusive college and your exclusive set and you found us a little crude, a little provincial when compared to the gay people you had known. (*He protests.*) Oh, yes you did! You missed your leisure class—you accepted your money as a matter of course—and while *you* played, Henry Carter rose by work and persistency to the very place that your father occupied—and that should have been yours.

MACDONALD. If dad had left me a definite business, Phyl—it would have been different.

PHYLLIS. What *did* he leave you?

MACDONALD. Stocks and bonds—

PHYLLIS. Intangible, naturally.

MACDONALD. Property—

PHYLLIS. Yes, of course—

MACDONALD. The *Clarion*—

PHYLLIS (*in great astonishment*). What? (*Rises.*)

MACDONALD (*rising*). The *Clarion*. Dad owned prac-

tically all the stock though it was a silent ownership and he never attempted to dictate the policies of the paper.

PHYLLIS. Why MacDonald Dunbar!

MACDONALD (*coming forward*). What's the matter now?

PHYLLIS. I'm stunned, that's all. To think that you own a newspaper—a big thriving newspaper—and are content to let another man act as its authority.

MACDONALD. I can't write.

PHYLLIS. I thought you *shone* on the college paper.

MACDONALD. Amateur work only.

PHYLLIS. Amateur work leads to professional—and, at any rate, you can *manage*.

MACDONALD. Well, I can manage one thing all right—to get you on the staff, if you still insist upon entering this particular field.

PHYLLIS. I am planning to apply at the *Clarion* office tomorrow.

MACDONALD. It won't be necessary. A note to my managing editor—

PHYLLIS (*interrupting*). No, thank you.

MACDONALD. What?

PHYLLIS. No, thank you. Please make no move in my behalf—for I prefer to rely upon my own efforts.

MACDONALD. Now Phyllis, that's one of your ridiculous independent notions—(*Puts hand on her shoulder.*)

PHYLLIS. Even as such it demands your consideration. Shall we join the others? (*They start toward the door at R.; suddenly PHYLLIS turns impulsively.*) Oh, Mac, Mac! You'll never find happiness in the easy-going life you've chosen. You'll never know the inspiration of fighting and winning! Don't waste your opportunities; make something of yourself; be true to all the splendid courage and purpose that is in you.

MACDONALD (*after a pause as he takes her hand*). By Jove, Phyl—I will! (*Exeunt R.*)

KITTY *steals quietly down the steps, carrying a disreputable looking hat and coat. From the pocket of the coat she*

pulls a pair of old gloves with a needle and thread in one finger, throws them on the table, lays the coat and hat on chair R. of table and is about to withdraw to the dining room when the door at L. & E. of table suddenly opens and MRS. VAN ALSTYNE enters.

KITTY (*in surprise*). Why Aunt Letitia! How you startled me. (*Crosses to her.*)

MRS. V. A. You deserve to be startled!—I found your front door unlocked—open—just an invitation for anybody to walk in and help himself. Of all the irresponsible, impossible households, this is the worst. Suppose some tramp had made away with—(*sarcastically*) all the Castleman heirlooms!

KITTY. I'm to blame, Aunt Letitia, for I must have forgotten to close the door when the boys came. But if you knew how I'd kept it barred and bolted and hadn't even answered the bell for the last week, you wouldn't call me careless. (*Pushes her on settee.*) Now sit right there—catch your breath—and let me get you a pillow (*puts pillow at back*) and a footstool—(*runs to stool and brings it*) and throw back your coat—so! (*Rapturously.*) Oh, what a pretty coat—and gown—and—oh, Aunt Letitia, your taste is simply exquisite! Whenever you choose clothes for me, I always feel that they're just right. (*Clasps hands.*)

MRS. V. A. (*highly gratified*). And I enjoy choosing things for you, Katherine. Someway, you've always seemed more like an Aldrich than Phyllis—

KITTY. How adorable of you to say so. (*Turns to R.*) By the way, Phyl and Carol are in the dining room with the boys. Shall I call them? They're all ready except for their wraps.

MRS. V. A. Then don't call them—yet. It's quite fashionable to arrive at the concert a little late, so I'll chat a few moments with you.

KITTY (*gushingly*). How dear and thoughtful you are, Aunt Letitia! (*Seats herself L. of table.*) While we talk you don't mind if I mend my gloves, do you? (*Takes*

gloves.) I have the wiggly-est fingers—nothing stands in their way. (*Mends glove.*)

MRS. V. A. (*using lorgnette*). Katherine Aldrich! You don't mean to say that you wear *those* things!

KITTY. Oh, Aunt Letitia, they're my *best*. Of course they *are* a little forlorn *now*, but just wait until my magic stitches pull them together.

MRS. V. A. They're disgraceful!

KITTY. Oh, I manage beautifully! By thrusting one hand carelessly into the front of my coat and sticking the other in my pocket, nobody suspects. (*Shivers.*) Ugh! It seems chilly in here—I believe I'll slip on my coat. (*Puts on coat.*)

MRS. V. A. (*after staring at coat*). Katherine! Of all the monstrosities in the way of coats this is the worst!

KITTY (*slowly revolving*). It does look as if it had sent regrets, doesn't it? But it's warm—and if a person is warm, she shouldn't worry about style. (*Puts on hat.*) *How do you like my hat?*

MRS. V. A. I prefer to be excused from answering that question.

KITTY. I made it myself.

MRS. V. A. That is quite evident.

KITTY (*plaintively*). Oh, Aunt Letitia—doesn't it—doesn't it—look all right?

MRS. V. A. It looks like—His Satanic Majesty, my dear. Now listen to me. Throw those gloves into the waste basket; give that hat and coat to your foolish looking maid; and tomorrow, we'll see what we can do in the way of a winter outfit.

KITTY (*rushing to her*). Oh—Aunt Letitia—you don't mean—new *clothes*! (*Sits by MRS. V. A.*)

MRS. V. A. Of course, I mean new clothes. Do you suppose I'll allow any Aldrich to look like a scarecrow? You wouldn't have been brought to this predicament if your poor dear father had married a wife instead of a family tree. A few grains of common sense and a sprinkling of practicality are of more value than a dozen ancestral portraits and a hundred pearls that may have been paste for all you know.

Enter PHYLLIS, CAROLYN, JOHN, MACDONALD from R.

PHYLLIS (*hurrying to her*). Why, Aunt Letitia! I had no idea you were here. We won't keep you waiting a moment. (CAROLYN greets MRS. V. A.) Good-bye boys—we'll see you tomorrow—and good luck to the campaign. Come, Carol! (*Exeunt PHYLLIS and CAROLYN upstairs.*)

JOHN (*with outstretched hand*). Well, if it isn't Mrs. Van Alstyne! Looking as young as she did in my childhood days. (*She takes his hand.*)

MRS. V. A. (*shaking finger at him*). When I caught you stealing apples, you young scamp. I see you haven't lost your smooth tongue. (JOHN joins KITTY who is standing back of chair L. of table.)

MACDONALD (*advancing*). He needs it in politics. (*Holds out hand.*) Howdy-do!

MRS. V. A. MacDonald Dunbar! (*Shakes his hand vigorously.*)

MACDONALD. Now don't scold me for not calling, for I'm coming this very week. (*Stands at her left.*)

MRS. V. A. Thursday's my day.

MACDONALD. I sha'n't forget. Come Jack—and good-bye Kit! (*Exeunt MACDONALD and JOHN at L. & E. after making adieux.*)

MRS. V. A. (*in a whisper*). Katherine, does Phyllis intend to marry young Dunbar?

KITTY (*sweetly*). There's a Ouija Board somewhere around. Shall we ask it? (*As PHYLLIS and CAROLYN descend the stairs.*) Here Phyl—let me straighten your collar. (*Straightens collar.*)—and Carol—(*arranging her scarf*)—I'll adjust your scarf. (*Embraces MRS. V. A.*) Aunt Letitia, you're a dear—and (*whispers*) I'll see you tomorrow! Good-bye, all of you—and be careful not to snore. It isn't being done at the best symphonies this year! (*Exeunt PHYLLIS, CAROLYN and MRS. V. A. at L. & E.*)

(KITTY moves leisurely about the room, closes the window, turns out some of the lights, yawns, slaps the image as she passes it, takes a book and sinks into a large chair L. of table.)

She reads for a moment, then yawns again—nods—and finally falls asleep.)

CURTAIN is lowered for a moment to indicate a passage of several hours.

(As the curtain rises again, a succession of short, sharp sounds is heard. KITTY awakens, startled. In a few moments comes a knock on the window. KITTY approaches the window hesitatingly.)

KITTY. Who's—who's there?

VOICE OUTSIDE. Just a somebody whose car has gone back on him and who would be asking the loan of a monkey wrench.

KITTY *(still hesitating)*. Who—who are you?

VOICE. A stranger in these parts.

KITTY *hesitates, then throws open the window. TERRENCE steps over the sill, looks at her in a bewildered fashion and slowly takes off his cap.*

TERRENCE *(after a long pause)*. Sure, and I didn't know that the purple ribbon of a road would lead me straight into the enchanted land. *(As KITTY draws back.)* Oh! I've frightened you—and it's just my Irish blood that runs away with my tongue and keeps me walking with my head in the clouds.

KITTY. I—don't understand.

TERRENCE. Sure and it's no wonder that you don't—so that's why I'd be explaining to you and asking your pardon a thousand times for disturbing you at this time of night. When the car came to grief I saw the light shining through the window and didn't stop to think how monstrous a thing it was to be descending upon a stranger sudden like and unannounced. *(Bows.)* Once more my apologies—and good-night. *(Starts to go.)*

KITTY. But don't you want the monkey wrench?

TERRENCE. Well, I wouldn't be troubling you for the world. *(Stands by settee.)*

KITTY. It's no trouble—*(goes to table and opens drawer)* for auntie keeps it here—and it isn't often that a monkey

wrench has a chance to act as an opening wedge to—Adventure!

TERRENCE (*eagerly*). And what is it you'd be calling—Adventure? (*Comes to her and takes monkey wrench.*)

KITTY. Adventure? It's just a bright feather in the cap of Everyday—

TERRENCE (*leaning toward her*). Faith and it's so bright that half the people don't see it. Why the foolish things don't even know that Romance is waiting just round the corner.

KITTY (*crossing to settee*). Oh, do you feel that way, too? (*Sits.*) And are you always expecting something beautiful and exciting—and mysterious—to happen? (*He follows and stands back of her.*)

TERRENCE. Sure and that's the Irish in me.

KITTY. And do you ever want to break away from stupid, prosy everyday things?

TERRENCE (*eagerly*). And ride far, far into the purple veil of the dark—with the pipes o' Pan to guide you—with a swish of gypsy wind on your face—and a twist of moonlight road to lead you into the Land of Dreams?

KITTY (*excitedly clasping her hands*). The Land of Dreams! Oh, you *do* understand, don't you? (*Rising and curtseying.*) I'm glad to meet you, Adventure—you've been a long time coming my way!

TERRENCE (*looking steadily at her*). And I've been looking for you, all my life—Dream Princess!

KITTY (*crossing and looking up whimsically at the portrait*). Oh, what are you thinking of me, you prim, precise, prunes-and-prisms thing! Even if Adventure *does* come at an unconventional hour—and isn't properly introduced—do you think for a minute that I'd send it away?

TERRENCE (*following*). Does she feel like *that*, about it? Well then—Adventure will produce proper credentials—and will confess to an earthly habitation. (*Hands card to KITTY.*)

KITTY (*reading*). Terrence Donovan. (*Mischievously.*) And sure, I'm wondering from what country you come!

TERRENCE. Whisht—and did you ever hear of a little emerald isle where the fairies weave their magic—where the wishing wells are as thick as star dust—where the lakes flash like silver in the sunlight—and where the elfin folk leave shamrock footprints? (*KITTY gazes at him as in a dream, then suddenly remembers herself.*)

KITTY (*reading*). University Club, New York City. (*Sighs.*) That doesn't sound like an Adventure! Somehow I imagined you a knight errant, roving from point to point, and doing all sorts of thrilling and wonderful things.

TERRENCE. Even an Adventure has to live. (*Comes nearer.*) You don't mind it's being an electrical engineer occasionally, do you? (*Suddenly.*) By the way, has the Dream Princess a name?

KITTY. It isn't a dreamy one—nor a princessy one—but Katherine Aldrich is the best I can do. (*Curtseys.*)

TERRENCE (*softly*). Faith and it's Kitty that suits you—with the saucy smile and the roguish Irish eyes of you!

KITTY. And has electrical engineering brought you down to the need of a monkey wrench?

TERRENCE. Asking your pardon again, Dream Princess, it's your very bad road along with my own carelessness that caused my downfall. I was driving recklessly along, thinking of—

KITTY (*quickly*). Fairies, wishing wells and—dream lands?

TERRENCE. No. (*Grimly.*) Of revenge!

KITTY (*in surprise*). Revenge!

TERRENCE. I've been hunting a man—for weeks—and he's escaped me.

KITTY. An enemy?

TERRENCE. An enemy—of my father; one who ruined him—disgraced him—years ago. I was just a kid then but I vowed I'd find him—and bring him to justice.

KITTY (*coming nearer*). Is there no chance for forgiveness?

TERRENCE. Not a chance. For it killed my dad. (*Changing his tone.*) But why am I telling you all this, Dream

Princess—and why am I lingering when I should be on my way—and—why, lots of things! (*Eagerly.*) May I be coming again?

KITTY (*cooly*). Well it's proper to return borrowed articles—and there's the monkey wrench, you know.

TERRENCE (*looking at it*). Faith and it's not a monkey wrench to me—it's a key to the future.

KITTY (*demurely*). Then don't you think you'd better keep it? It isn't ever wise to be without a key.

TERRENCE (*softly*). May I? (*Motor horn sounds.*) What's that?

KITTY. My sister and aunt returning from a concert. Will you meet them?

TERRENCE. Would they look upon me as an—Adventure?

KITTY (*shaking head*). No, I don't think they would. I'm quite sure my aunt wouldn't.

TERRENCE. Then I'll be on my way. (*After a pause.*) Good-bye, Dream Princess. (*Holds out his hand.*)

KITTY (*taking it*). Good-bye, Adventure! (*Exit TERRENCE through window. KITTY stands at the window looking after him.*)

Enter PHYLLIS and CAROLYN at L. 2 E.

PHYLLIS. Kitty! Why are you staying up so late? And why is that window open? Anyone could enter without your knowledge.

CAROLYN. And what are you looking at? (*Crosses to window.*) Why, Phyl—there's a man working on the roadster we passed a moment ago. (*PHYLLIS joins her.*) See? Why I do believe he's staring at us!

KITTY (*closing window*). Well I can't have *that*,—gazing at a man to whom you've not been properly introduced! (*Pushes them from window.*) I fell—asleep—here—so that's why I did you the honor of waiting your return. 'Twas quite unintentional. How was the concert? (*Perches on arm of chair L. of table.*)

PHYLLIS (*sitting R. of table*). I've never seen lovelier gowns—have you Carol?

CAROLYN (*on arm of settee*). Never. And jewels! The house twinkled like one big bright star.

KITTY (*sarcastically*). Dear me! How foolish for them to have a program at all! Or *was* there a program? You didn't mention any music—so maybe you forgot to notice. (*Telephone rings and she starts up.*) I expect that's for me!

PHYLLIS (*taking telephone*). For you? Who on earth would be calling you at such an hour? Probably the wrong number. (*At telephone.*) Yes?—MacDonald! Why what's the matter?—Please say that again—Do you mean it—really?—Mac, you don't know how happy that makes me—and how proud.—Of course I'll help you—and I'll report tomorrow. (*Hangs up receiver and turns excitedly.*) Mac's done it—Mac's done it!

KITTY (*at L. of table*). Done *what*? Proposed again?

PHYLLIS. Better than that! He's taken over the management of the *Clarion*—and we're going to work on it—together! (*Throws arms about KITTY.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE: *The Clarion office. Practical door at R. U. E. to office and at L. U. E. to hall. Window C. in F. Hat tree with several hats and a cap at R. U. E. Chair L. of hat tree. Large desk with papers, telephone, etc., R. 2 E. Chairs R. and L. of desk. Typewriters and typewriter chairs at L. 2 E. and up stage L. of C. Papers scattered over floor.*

At rise, TED is standing at L. reading; LESTER is seated at desk and FREDERICKA is standing at L. of table. Stage is well illuminated.

LESTER (*holding out copy*). Here Ted—take this to the pressroom. (*TED takes copy and goes out at L. U. E.*) Clever piece of work Miss Farr.

FREDERICKA. Praise from a managing editor, Mr. Ross, is the first goal of an ambitious journalist.

LESTER. Indeed! Your remark gives me an opportunity of asking just why one of your marked ability is satisfied with a reportorial position upon a small city paper.

FREDERICKA. Did I express myself as satisfied?

LESTER. In a large city—New York for example, you could—

FREDERICKA (*interrupting*). New York—in time; but, for the present—here. Don't worry about my ambition, Mr. Ross, for it is just as colossal as that of the great financier who granted me the interview.

LESTER. By the way—how did he happen to grant it? And how did you happen to know that he was here?

FREDERICKA. My lucky star—as usual—for I saw him enter the hotel—and recognized him. Even the assumed name under which he registered didn't deceive me—and in due time I sent up my card.

LESTER. But he abhors interviews.

FREDERICKA. I tactfully scribbled on my card that I was a friend of his daughter. (*Laughingly*.)—I *did* know her—over the telephone—when I was on the society column in her city.

LESTER. And he fell for it?

FREDERICKA. He certainly did. After I had extracted all the information I desired, I broke the news of my profession—and—(*hesitates*.)

LESTER (*eagerly*). Yes?

FREDERICKA. Well—for a moment he was stunned—then he threw back his head, laughed loud and long, took the blow like a good sport—and invited me to lunch. (*Pauses*.) I went!

LESTER. All of which goes to prove—

FREDERICKA (*seating herself L. of table*). Two things—(*emphatically*) two things I say. First, that stratagem is a very necessary asset of a successful reporter; second—that any man is as clay in the hands of a clever woman, provided she is arrayed in a good looking suit, understands the art of flattery, and uses her eyes—with discretion.

LESTER. Anyway it's a good scoop for the *Clarion*.

FREDERICKA. And it's quite evident that the *Clarion* needs a scoop of some kind, in order to revive its waning personality.

LESTER. I don't understand.

FREDERICKA. Oh, yes, you do. You know just as well as I that this young millionaire is playing a trifle too vigorously with his new toy (*leaning forward*) and that it's bound to break.

LESTER. I'll take issue with you on the word *playing*, Miss Farr. I thought so, myself, at first; in fact we all believed that Dunbar was showing only a passing interest in his property and that the novelty would soon wear off. But we've changed our minds.

FREDERICKA (*sarcastically*). Indeed!

LESTER. For he's proved that it's a vital matter to him and that he's earnestly and sincerely trying to make his paper a public institution which shall stand for the best things and which isn't afraid to buck up against municipal evils.

FREDERICKA. And which professes to apply an ethical test to all its dealings. It isn't the millennium yet—MacDonald Dunbar can't conquer the combination of business and politics—he can't prove an obstacle to Henry Carter. So, as a result, it will be—good-bye, *Clarion*!

LESTER. You forget that Dunbar has an independent fortune.

FREDERICKA. How much do you suppose he'll devote to the cause of a newspaper that brings no return and is no source of income?

LESTER. On the other hand, if he can hold on until the tide turns, if he can defeat Carter,—if he can carry on his plans—he—

FREDERICKA (*rising*). If—if—if! That seems to be the most important word in your vocabulary, at present. (*Crosses to typewriter up stage and seats herself.*)

LESTER. Except success. Wait until our guns volley it forth.

FREDERICKA. Does the entire staff expect such a message?

LESTER. It does; for we all have faith in the man behind the gun.

FREDERICKA (*insimulatingly*). What about the girl behind the man behind the gun?

LESTER. I beg your pardon?

FREDERICKA. You know what I mean—Phyllis Aldrich. The swish of a skirt is the dominant note in this office, at present.

LESTER. Miss Aldrich holds merely the position of a reporter.

FREDERICKA. Oh, *does* she! I fancied that she had a hand in dictating the policy of the paper.

LESTER (*rising and crossing to her*). Stop right there, Miss Farr—if you mean that Dunbar is swayed by his friendship with Miss Aldrich. For his ideas are his own; he's a man in the truest sense of the word; and if he is trying to make this a clean paper—by Jove, we'll stand by him.

FREDERICKA (*airily*). Count me out, Mr. Ross—count me out. (*Rises.*) I consider my own interests—and only my own interests. If I had stopped to measure all my actions by your ethical standard, I'd not be—where I am. (*Goes to hat tree and puts on hat and coat.*)

LESTER. You mean—(*Returns to desk.*)

FREDERICKA. Just what I've said—

Enter MACDONALD and PHYLLIS, L. U. E.

FREDERICKA. And now I'm off. Just in time to say good-morning to the firm. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

PHYLLIS (*looking after her*). Now what did she mean by that? (*At C.*) Mac, I don't like her.

MACDONALD. Nonsense. She's the cleverest woman on the staff—isn't she, Ross?

LESTER. Undoubtedly. She's just handed in an interview that's a downright triumph for the *Clarion*.

MACDONALD. You see, she's so everlastingly pretty that nobody suspects her cleverness; so, before the victim realizes his mistake, the desired information is in her hands.

PHYLLIS (*coolly*). From your trend of speech, I judge that the victim is usually a man.

LESTER. Quite so. She twists him around her little finger.

PHYLLIS. And throws her eyes around his neck. I know the type. (*Crosses to typewriter L. & E., seats herself and throws off coat.*)

MACDONALD (*crossing to hat tree*). Good gracious, Phyl—you sound like any other woman describing her best friend.

Enter BURTON from R. U. E. He hesitates as he sees them.

MACDONALD. Come on in, Burton! (*Hangs hat on tree.*)

BURTON. I've some important business, Dunbar.

MACDONALD. Speak right out. Miss Aldrich and Mr. Ross are in my confidence. (*Stands back of chair L. of desk.*)

BURTON. It's about our advertising.

MACDONALD. Yes?

BURTON. It's shot to pieces—ruined—that's all. Carter's manager has just withdrawn his contract—and Carter was our biggest advertiser.

MACDONALD. Go on. (*Drops in chair L. of table.*)

BURTON. Other local firms are sure to follow suit—after what's happened.

LESTER (*rising*). Just to see where we stand, suppose we go back to the beginning of things. Your first offense, Dunbar, was backing the grading ordinance.

MACDONALD. An ordinance which was for the public's good, you must admit.

LESTER. Undoubtedly. But opposed by Murphy, political boss and also Carter's right hand man.

MACDONALD. We've talked that over thoroughly, I believe. My only answer is—we still support the ordinance.

LESTER. Very well. Now your next move was upon the traction company—and it was regarded as a direct attack upon capital.

MACDONALD. Thanks to your bully editorials, Ross. (*Grimly.*) If I had it to do over, I'd take exactly the same stand.

LESTER. And your constant opposition of Carter as a political candidate, is naturally an uphill proposition.

MACDONALD. No fight which isn't against heavy odds is worth the effort.

LESTER. Very true. But I've merely mentioned these points as the reason for Mathews' discouraging report.

MACDONALD. Which report, in substance, is *this*. We must cater to the whims of the people who give us the advertising—even if the people themselves are upholding the wrong thing.

BURTON. It's merely a matter of business, Dunbar. Our success depends upon that of our advertisers. Isn't it a natural inference that they should expect us to support measures which make for their welfare?

PHYLLIS. Mr. Mathews has practical experience on his side, Mac—as opposed to your theory. Don't be impulsive—don't be carried away by a foolish notion; don't—

MACDONALD (*rising*). Look here, Phyl—and listen. (*To the others.*) And listen, both of you! This is my paper—*my paper*,—and even if I manage it in the wrong way, it's got to be *my way*. It's the only big interest I've ever had—it's *my interest, my fight!* Why I'll hold on to it if it takes every cent I have—and if the *Clarion* goes down, I go with it. (*Pauses.*) Now, do you understand?

LESTER (*coming around front of desk*). It's what we've been waiting to hear—and it's just about as final a statement as we need. We're with you, Dunbar. (*Holds out hand.*)

MACDONALD (*taking it*). You mean it?

BURTON (*with hand on MACDONALD's shoulder*). To a man, all this preliminary has been merely a statement of facts. Now, we're ready for action.

MACDONALD. There's not much I can say to you fellows after this—

BURTON. Then don't try. (*Turns.*) Ross, can you spare me a few moments? There's some planning we must do.

LESTER. I'll be with you right away—unless Dunbar, here—

MACDONALD. I'm off to Harlan. There are some securities he must turn into ready money for me. (*Goes out R. U. E. returning almost immediately with papers.*) (*Exeunt LESTER and BURTON L. U. E.*) Keep office, will you, Phyl? I'll give you entire jurisdiction.

PHYLLIS (*coolly*). Thank you—but I'm going out. (*Rises.*)

MACDONALD (*helping her with coat*). Then I'll give you a lift in the car.

PHYLLIS. Thank you—but I prefer to walk.

MACDONALD (*indifferently*). Oh, very well—suit yourself. (*Exits L. U. E.*)

Enter KITTY, L. U. E.

KITTY. Newspaper work has a very bad effect upon manners. Mac used to be so polished that you could see yourself reflected—but *now*—well, he brushed past me in the hall and didn't take time to recognize me. (*Hangs coat and hat on tree.*)

PHYLLIS (*at C.*). Has it ever occurred to you that matters more important than you may occupy his mind?

KITTY. I presume you mean yourself. (*Sits L. of desk.*)

PHYLLIS. Hardly. At present, my image is but a speck in Mac's kaleidoscopic mind.

KITTY. That's what you've been trying to bring about for years, isn't it? Someway you don't appear hilariously jubilant over your victory.

PHYLLIS (*sharply*). Never mind my affairs. What are you doing here?

KITTY (*opening notebook*). I told you that in order to get experience, I am assisting the society editor. I took notes at the ball last night.

PHYLLIS. Chiefly on the men—from all appearances.

KITTY. Not at all. In fact, American men bore me; foreigners are so much more fascinating.

PHYLLIS (*impatiently*). Kitty Aldrich, you've never met a foreigner.

KITTY (*smiles mysteriously*).

PHYLLIS. Now why do you smile in such an aggravating way. (*Shakes her.*) I'm getting out of patience with you. A month ago you gave every evidence of becoming a well-poised, self-assertive woman—and now—well you've changed, that's all.

KITTY. Well I've changed my views upon economic independence, *that's* certain. At present, I'm perfectly satisfied to accept a meal ticket for life—if I can get it.

PHYLLIS. *Kitty!*

KITTY. Making one's way is not so enchanting as you painted it.

PHYLLIS (*motioning to her paper*). Surely, Mac doesn't pay you for—*that?*

KITTY. No, he doesn't. I might take more interest if he *did*.

PHYLLIS. You can't expect compensation while you are gaining experience; you—

KITTY (*tauntingly*). "Woman's work will never assume dignity until it is measured and compensated." Those are your own words!

Enter TED L. U. E., reading.

PHYLLIS. I don't feel like arguing, Kitty—and I've work of my own to do. (*Turns.*) Good-bye.

KITTY. I've not heard of any scoop you've landed so far. (*PHYLLIS glances at her scornfully and passes out.*) Hello, Ted! What are you reading?

TED (*at C.*). A detect-uff story.

KITTY (*rising and crossing to him*). Oh, I just dote on detective stories. (*Takes the book.*) Sherlock Holmes! Wasn't he a wiz?

TED. Gee! Why he could tell just where a fellow had been by the dust on his shoes; and just what he had been writing, by the ink spot on his finger; and just what sort of a guy he was by the way he fixed his necktie.

KITTY. Exactly. If I were a boy, I think I'd like to be a detective myself. (*Hands back book.*)

TED (*glancing around and whispering*). Miss Kitty, I'll tell you something—if you promise never to breathe it.

KITTY. Cross my heart and hope to die! (*Crosses heart.*)

TED. *I'm going to be a detect-uff!* (*Scornfully.*) None of this newspaper stuff for me.

KITTY. I should say not. Can't you practice your detecting here?

TED (*disgustedly*). Nothing doing. Why, what I need is to be following 'round and shadowing people. Nobody here needs shadowing—they're all so darn respectable.

KITTY (*crossing to L. 2 E.*). Dear me, Ted! Belinda's *Homeside Companion*, your detective stories and my own adventure make me forget that there's any such stupid thing—as (*sighs*) the society column. (*Moves to typewriter.*) I must get to work. (*Seats herself.*)

TED (*following her*). Who's Belinda?

KITTY. My partner in romantic speculation.

TED. And what was your adventure?

KITTY. Well—you see—somebody broke in the house and stole something.

TED (*with interest*). What did he steal?

KITTY. A monkey wrench.

TED (*scornfully*). That wasn't anything. He couldn't have known much about swiping.

KITTY. I think he stole something else, too—in fact, I'm quite sure of it.

TED. Gee! But I'd like to be shadowing *him*.

KITTY. Oh, so should I. (*Dreamily.*) Far, far into the purple veil of the dark, with the pipes of Pan to guide me, with the swish of gypsy air on my face and a twist of moonlight road to lead me into the Land of Dreams! (*Gazes abstractedly into space.*)

TED (*anxiously, after a moment*). What's the matter, Miss Kitty? Anything gone to your head?

KITTY. Only to my heart, Ted. (*Settles herself at typewriter.*) Now, let me see. You push this down when you want capitals, don't you? (*TED nods.*) And press on this to separate words—(*TED nods*) and—. Ugh! I hate a type-

writer, Ted. It takes all your pretty words and phrases and grinds them out in hard cold type that makes one's spelling and punctuation look like a crazy quilt. (*Types for a moment.*)

TED (*looking over her shoulder*). Gosh—but that's mixed, Miss Kitty.

KITTY (*handing him notebook*). Now you read it to me—while I write—(*Points.*) *Here.*

TED (*reads*). Mrs. Mont—Mont—(*hesitates*).

KITTY (*as she types*). Montmorency—

TED. Mont-mor-en-cy Du-pont's be-witch-ing beau-ty was set off by a gown of water-mel-on pink—

KITTY. Wait until I catch up. (*After a moment of typing.*) Do you know what I'd like to write, Ted, and what would be really true? Just this—Mrs. Montmorency Dupont's faded and wrinkled artificiality was increased by the gay color of a gown which would be too young for her daughter. (*Pauses.*) Well, go on!

TED (*reads*). Mrs. Reg-i-nald Van Tassel wore—(*Telephone rings.*)

KITTY. Let me answer it. (*Crosses and takes up telephone.*) Yes, this is the *Clarion*.—He isn't in—No, I don't know when—*Who?* Mr. Carter?—Come to *your* office? Since when has Mr. Dunbar been taking orders from you?—If you wish a conference I fear you must meet him here.—(*Hangs up receiver.*)

TED (*at C.*). Gee—Miss Kitty—was that *Carter*—the *big Carter*?

KITTY. The *big Carter*! Oh, Ted, I never thought of *that*—do you suppose it *was*? And the way I talked! (*Runs to window.*) His office is just across the street—and he'll be right over, for he was simply furious—and I don't wonder. (*Suddenly.*) I'll hide in Mac's office—for I just couldn't face him after what I've said—and if he should decide to wait, Ted—you come back to me when he's not looking! (*Goes in office R. U. E. and shuts door.*)

TED *hurries to window—leans out—and while his back is turned, CARTER enters at L. U. E.*

CARTER (*looking around*). Well, for the office of a booming newspaper, this seems fairly deserted. (*Sarcastically.*) Are you the proprietor?

TED. I'm not Mr. Dunbar, if *that's* what you mean?

CARTER. Where is Mr. Dunbar?

TED. He's out.

CARTER. Everybody out?

TED (*motioning*). Mr. Ross and Mr. Mathews are across the hall.

CARTER (*significantly*). And Mr. Dunbar is in his office, isn't he?

TED. No—he's not.

CARTER. Come now, my boy—if you'll show me into that room, I'll—(*Shows dollar to him.*)

TED. You can't buy me, Mr. Carter, any more than you can buy Mr. Dunbar or the *Clarion*.

CARTER (*angrily*). You impudent little rascal! Then I'll proceed to wait for your irreproachable master. (*Sits himself L. of table.*)

TED. Just as you please, sir. (*Crosses to L. as if to leave the room—then turns, tiptoes to door of office and enters.*)

After a moment FREDERICKA enters at L. U. E. She starts as she sees CARTER.

FREDERICKA (*without looking at him*). Isn't it a bit—dangerous—to come here? (*Comes down L.*)

CARTER (*starting*). I must see Dunbar.

FREDERICKA. Dunbar is at present with his lawyer—John Harlan.

CARTER. Then—perhaps the coast is clear for a few words.

FREDERICKA. Ross and Mathews? (*CARTER rises and goes to chair R. of desk.*)

CARTER. Across the hall. (*After a significant pause.*) Well?

FREDERICKA (*quietly*). The order for a large shipment of paper went out yesterday. A delay in delivery would be—most inconvenient. (*Sits herself L. of table.*)

CARTER. I understand.

FREDERICKA. There is a noticeable falling off in the advertising.

CARTER. Yes.

FREDERICKA. And a timely word to the proper authorities would result in the withdrawal of election advertising.

CARTER. It can be done.

Door of office opens quietly, KITTY peers out cautiously and as she sees FREDERICKA, deliberately listens.

FREDERICKA. Trivial—and unsuspected—accidents have been detrimental to the bank account. (*Silence for a moment.*) In fact, Mr. Carter, the way seems clear—if plans materialize—for you to obtain the *Clarion* at a low figure.

CARTER (*eagerly*). And Dwyer?

FREDERICKA. Is a good tool. His place in the press-room gives him every opportunity.

CARTER. You have paid him?

FREDERICKA. Lavishly—and he is quite prepared to do—what you wish.

CARTER (*with evident relief*). Then our bargain is at an end. (*Leans back in chair.*)

FREDERICKA. As far as the *Clarion* is concerned.

CARTER (*sharply*). What do you mean?

FREDERICKA (*rising*). That—being of a practical nature—I desire to provide for the future. (*Leans over desk.*) Mr. Carter, I want another ten thousand.

CARTER (*rising*). Are you crazy, woman?

FREDERICKA (*turning away*). No—only clever. The two are often confused. (*Pauses.*) Mr. Carter—you wish to win in the coming election, I presume?

CARTER. A foolish question.

FREDERICKA. And you also wish to keep your position of leading citizen in this part of the country?

CARTER. I intend to do so.

FREDERICKA (*calmly powdering her nose*). Then of course you wouldn't care for the Donovan story to be made public.

CARTER (*taken unawares*). What do you mean?

FREDERICKA. And it might cause criticism should the fact of your assumed name be discovered.

CARTER. You've lost your senses.

FREDERICKA. Hardly. If I hadn't taken extraordinary good care of them, I shouldn't have you—where you are.

CARTER. A trumped-up story.

FREDERICKA (*insinuatingly*). Do you really think so, *George Mason?* (*He starts.*) Ah—I see you recognize your name. Well—perhaps it will interest you to know that my father knew Mr. Donovan well; that, from my childhood, I have known the story of—

CARTER. Hush!

FREDERICKA (*coming to him*). The trusting unsuspecting man who gave himself wholly into your unscrupulous clutches—who became responsible for all your debts and trickery when the failure came.

CARTER (*desperately*). You can't prove it!

FREDERICKA. Oh, can't I! A chance visit of my father revealed your identity to me. And—have you forgotten the small boy?

CARTER. He disappeared—

FREDERICKA. Just as you did. But he disappeared only temporarily. After his wealthy aunt had seen fit to send him to the best universities in America and Ireland—her home—she left him her entire estate.

CARTER. Well?

FREDERICKA. He's back—in New York—with an independent fortune, a perfectly good roadster and a fascinating brogue.

CARTER. You've seen him?

FREDERICKA. Many times.

CARTER. He—remembers?

FREDERICKA. Sons don't forget such things—as a rule. And a gentle hint from *me*—

CARTER. So you threaten me.

FREDERICKA. Oh, no, I don't. I offer you my silence in return for—ten thousand. (*Pauses.*) I'll be at the book-

store across the street. Will you follow me in a moment? Perhaps we can come to an understanding. (*Exit L. U. E.*)

CARTER *sits L. of desk for a moment with his head on his hands—then follows her L. U. E.* KITTY *dashes from the office followed by TED.*

KITTY (*pushing him to L. U. E.*) Ted! Stand by that door and tell me if anybody is coming. (*Takes telephone.*) Central give me long distance—Long distance?—Connect me with the University Club—New York City—and, oh, yes—charge the call to the *Clarion*—Yes, the *Clarion*. (*Hangs up receiver and hurries to TED.*) Now, Ted, here's some real detective work for you. Follow Miss Farr—watch where she goes—find out whom she meets—listen to what she says—and—*don't* let her see you. (*Ted catches his cap from the rack.*) No—you can't wear *that*—it's no kind of a sleuthing hat—and you ought to disguise yourself. (*Takes Lester's hat from rack.*) Here—take Mr. Ross'—pull it down—*so*—now hurry. (*Exit TED L. U. E. as telephone rings. Kitty hurries to it.*) University Club?—I want Mr. Donovan—Mr. Terrence Donovan—and *quick*, please. (*Turns and nervously watches door.*) Hello!—Hello!—I can't understand—Just gone out the door? Well, catch him—*catch him*—it's important—so very important. (*To herself, as she waits.*) Oh—h-h-h! Hello!—Oh, is it you, Adventure?—It's—it's—Kitty Aldrich!—Don't say that over the 'phone. Anyway, I haven't time to listen—Do you remember telling me about the man you wanted to find? Yes, yes—Well, he's here—I can't explain—but he *is*—and won't you come?—*Right away?*—Oh, here in the *Clarion* office. Then it won't be long?—Thank you—oh, thank you. Good-bye. (*Hangs up receiver.*)

KITTY *sinks exhaustedly before the typewriter L. & E.* As LESTER enters she straightens up and begins to pound it furiously.

LESTER. Ted! Ted! Where on earth is that boy?

KITTY. I sent him on an errand, Mr. Ross.

LESTER (*in surprise*). An errand? (*Crosses to her.*)

KITTY. My errand.

LESTER. But, my dear Miss Aldrich, he isn't supposed to leave this office—except on business.

KITTY. This was business—important business.

LESTER. Will he be gone long?

KITTY. Indefinitely.

LESTER (*crossing to hat tree*). Then I'll be obliged to go, myself. (*As he looks for his hat.*) Where's my hat?

KITTY (*nervously*). Oh—I think Ted wore it.

LESTER (*crossing to her*). Wore my hat? Why in thunderation did he wear my hat?

KITTY (*confusedly*). Why—why—it seemed more becoming—and—can't you wear his cap? (LESTER glances witheringly at her and flings himself down at his desk.)

Enter MACDONALD L. U. E.

MACDONALD (*hurrying to Lester*). Jove, but I'm glad to find you, old man. Harlan and I have been hard at it—and—(LESTER glances inquiringly at KITTY who has stopped her typing and is listening). You don't mind leaving us a moment, do you, Kit?

KITTY (*with dignity*). Certainly not. (*As if to herself.*) Men are so easily peeved. (*With great deliberation she rises, arranges her papers, smooths her hair, puts on her coat and gloves, LESTER and MACDONALD waiting nervously and impatiently for her to depart. As she leaves the room at L. U. E. she turns and smiles beamingly.*) Good-bye! (*Exit L. U. E.*)

LESTER (*with relief*). Thank heaven! Now, what is it?

MACDONALD. Harlan has placed some property on the market—and as real estate is booming we ought to realize a lot from that.

LESTER. But, it's *your* property.

MACDONALD. What do you mean?

LESTER. Carter's faction is clever enough to crowd your stuff off the market.

MACDONALD. Impossible.

LESTER. You can be pretty sure that they intend to keep any cash from coming your way.

MACDONALD. Surely they haven't that power.

LESTER. Maybe not. But why not use the securities?

MACDONALD (*hesitatingly*). I don't understand Harlan's attitude in regard to that side of the proposition. He's non-committal and says he must confer with my broker.

LESTER. Is your broker satisfactory?

MACDONALD. I've never stopped to notice—but I've always given him absolute authority. From this time on, I'll have a hand in my own affairs.

Enter CARTER, L. U. E.

MACDONALD (*rises*). Why, Mr. Carter, this is truly an unexpected visit.

CARTER (*at C.*). Unexpected on my part, I assure you. I planned to offer you the hospitality of my own office—but some very saucy person on your staff assured me that you took no orders from anyone—so here I am. (*Tosses hat on typewriter L. & E.*)

MACDONALD (*motioning him to L. of desk*). I, doubtless, would have expressed myself more tactfully but—the sentiment is mine, just the same.

CARTER. May I claim a few moments of your time? (*Sits.*)

MACDONALD. Most certainly. (*As CARTER glances toward LESTER.*) Mr. Ross is quite familiar with all my affairs. You know him I presume? (*Brings chair from L. of hat tree and places it at back of desk, at CARTER's right.*)

CARTER. I've had that pleasure—chiefly through his editorials. They have been quite like personal advertisements.

LESTER. All's fair in love, war and politics, Mr. Carter.

CARTER. Seriously speaking, Dunbar, why have you chosen to oppose me in this fashion?

MACDONALD (*seating himself*). Suppose we say that I am upholding your rival candidate. That sounds more friendly.

CARTER. Friendly is hardly descriptive of your attitude, my dear boy. From the first, I have been interested in your career—eager for your success—and from the first you have met my overtures with hostility.

MACDONALD. I don't understand, Mr. Carter—for I am not aware of any personal dislike or personal animosity.

CARTER. But you have fought my interests—and my candidacy.

MACDONALD. But—suppose that I do not believe in your interests—and choose to support my own candidate. Need that involve the personal equation?

CARTER. Insinuations have been made—

MACDONALD. Doubtless.

CARTER. Questionable transactions have been hinted—

LESTER. Do you expect a political race without any obstacles, Mr. Carter?

CARTER. Hardly. But I am in the habit—of removing obstacles.

MACDONALD. To how few of us does that privilege come!

CARTER (*leaning toward him*). See here young fellow—I don't know what your object is—but I do know that you are creating a public sentiment unfavorable to me and at the same time are bringing yourself into desperate straits. This sort of condition can't last—so, what is a change of policy worth to you?

MACDONALD. I don't quite understand I'm afraid.

CARTER (*impatiently*). Oh, come, come! I think you do. Now, Dunbar, I can help you—you can help me; suppose we strike a bargain at your own terms.

MACDONALD (*rising*). You are offering to buy the *Clarion*?

CARTER (*rising*). Substantially.

MACDONALD. And my services?

CARTER. Naturally you would retain your position.

MACDONALD. Under your dictation?

CARTER. Don't call it dictation—rather, a mutual agreement. (*Moves to C.*)

MACDONALD (*after a pause*). Mr. Carter, if you were not an older man, I would show you the door. (*Comes to C.*) You can't understand fair play, can you? You think that every man has his price, that he yields to the highest

bidder, that money is the only measuring rod! Then hear my answer and regard it as final. My paper is not for sale—my self-respect is not negotiable—and the only bargain we can ever strike is—open hostility.

Enter PHYLLIS L. U. E.; she stands hesitating, as she sees them, then crosses to R.

CARTER (*furiously*). Then, you young idiot, we understand each other. You've had your chance, you've turned it down—and now you can take what comes. I shall not give you a particle of mercy; I'll not furnish you an avenue of escape; I'll hold you, bend you, and, by heaven, I'll break you.

MACDONALD. You may do all that, Mr. Carter—all that and more. You may threaten me in whatever way you choose; you may force me to fight against trickery and fraud; you may make me the object of your taunts and your malice; but one thing you *can't* do—you can't take away my manhood, my honor and my sense of what is right. Good-bye. (CARTER *hesitates, attempts to speak, takes his hat and then hurries from the room L. U. E.*)

PHYLLIS (*hurrying forward*). Mac! What's happened?

MACDONALD. My enemy has shown his hand—that's all. (*To Ross.*) Will you come to my office a moment, Ross? (MACDONALD and Ross *withdraw to the office*. PHYLLIS *looks after them in surprise and resentment—then walks slowly to window and gazes out.*)

Enter JOHN, hurriedly, L. U. E.

JOHN. Where's Mac, Phyl?

PHYLLIS (*turning*). In his office—with Mr. Ross. (*Noticing his evident agitation.*) Why Jack—what is it? (*Comes to C.*)

JOHN. Phyl, I'm up against it—I don't know how to tell Mac—I don't know how he'll take the news—and—

PHYLLIS. What is it? (*Sinks in chair L. of desk.*)

JOHN. He's gone to smash. Now how can one break a blow like that? (*Walks up and down L.*)

PHYLLIS. Gone to smash?

JOHN. Beyond the shadow of a doubt.

PHYLLIS. But *how*?

JOHN (*at L. & E.*). Bad investments—due to his broker—and unfortunately, not investigated by Mac.

PHYLLIS. How did it happen?

JOHN. His money was invested in Mexican securities and the broker acting with the full authority which Mac gave him, sold out and bought Amalgamated Steel. Yesterday, Amalgamated Steel went down—completely down and out.

PHYLLIS. Everything is gone?

JOHN. Practically everything, save his home, his business properties, some bank stock and a few odds and ends.

PHYLLIS. Oh, how terrible! To think of the splendid fortune his father accumulated, wiped out in a single day.

Unseen by PHYLLIS and JOHN, MACDONALD and LESTER appear at office door.

JOHN. I'm not thinking of his father—I'm thinking of Mac. Why the fellow has never had a desire ungratified—he doesn't know the value of a dollar; without capital—and with this burden of a paper on his shoulders—well I'd rather be shot than tell him—that's all.

MACDONALD (*crossing to desk*). It must be pretty bad, Jack, if you're that anxious for a bullet. (*To Lester.*) That's all for the present, Ross—and thank you. (*Exit LESTER R. U. E.*) Come now—out with it.

JOHN. Mac—old man—(*Desperately.*) Tell him, Phyl.

PHYLLIS. Your stocks are quite—worthless—Mac. I'm putting it awkwardly—but—

MACDONALD (*leaning on desk*). I understand! I understood, Jack, when you tried to break the news awhile ago.

JOHN. I didn't know for certain, then—it's only since you left that definite news has come.

MACDONALD. .It's quite definite?

JOHN. Quite.

MACDONALD. So—it's up to me.

JOHN (*crossing back of PHYLLIS*). I'm afraid so. (*Puts hand on shoulder.*) Mac, give up the paper.

MACDONALD (*after a moment*). Once upon a time, Jack, I was on my college team. I knew what it was to wait in a breathless silence until the ball should come my way—I knew that the signal meant I must make the goal. (*Pauses.*) That's how I feel about the paper.

JOHN. Then go to it, old man—and I'm with you.

MACDONALD. Thanks. Now suppose you reconnoiter and find out just what's left to me.

JOHN. I'm off. (*Exits L. U. E.*)

MACDONALD. And with this new complication, I'd better be consulting Mathews. You'll excuse me, Phyl. (*Starts off to R. U. E.*)

PHYLLIS. Mac?

MACDONALD (*turning*). Yes?

PHYLLIS. I'm sorry—

MACDONALD. I know you are—but don't let my hard luck trouble you.

PHYLLIS. How can I help it?

MACDONALD. For it's a sort of retribution—after all my wasted years of indifference to my own affairs.

PHYLLIS. You've changed.

MACDONALD. Naturally. Experience and responsibility usually leave their mark.

PHYLLIS. I mean—you've changed toward me.

MACDONALD. That's natural, too. For a long time you were the central figure of my existence—it's different now.

PHYLLIS. You mean that you don't think of me in the same way?

MACDONALD (*coming close to her*). Phyl, you'll always be the same to me—nothing can change that—but I see your standpoint now—I understand your desire for independence—and I'll never trouble you again.

PHYLLIS. What do you mean?

MACDONALD. By asking you to marry me. The loss of my money has settled that question—forever.

PHYLLIS. Listen to me—and try to understand. (*Places*

hands on his shoulders.) Forget that I am Phyl—the girl you've known all your life—and think of me only as a business-like and enthusiastic young woman who longs to help out in the particular problem that confronts you, who begs to work with you, hope with you, believe in you, win with you. Look upon me, Mac, as your partner.

MACDONALD (*taking her hands*). Do you really mean this, Phyl?

PHYLLIS. *Mean it!* It's everything to me! I, too, want to prove that I can conquer a situation—that I can be friend and companion. Oh, Mac, I want you to feel that I'm—necessary—to you!

MACDONALD. Then you shall have your chance—and we'll begin by facing the—finances! Come! (*As they pass out L. U. E.* KITTY meets them.)

KITTY (*apologetically*). I'm just looking for—something—that's why I'm back. (*Turns.*) Oh, Mac?

MACDONALD. Yes?

KITTY. If I should need you where will you be?

MACDONALD. Across the hall. (*Exeunt PHYLLIS and MACDONALD L. U. E.*)

KITTY *peers out window, hangs up coat and hat, walks nervously back and forth and looks at the time. Suddenly a blast from an auto horn breaks the silence. She hurries to the window, smiles and motions. In a moment, TERENCE enters L. U. E.*

TERRENCE (*hurrying to her at L. 2 E.*). Faith, and is it you, Dream Princess? I can never be thinking of you apart from moonlight, romance and the star-wandering wings of enchantment. (*Takes both her hands.*)

KITTY. And why should you be thinking of me at all?

TERRENCE. Whisht! And how can anyone keep from thinking of sunshine, flowers—and the Land o' Dreams? (*Eagerly.*) You had my letters? (*Throws hat on typewriter L. of C.*)

KITTY. Yes.

TERRENCE. And never an answer for me!

KITTY. Someway, I couldn't write, Adventure. I wanted you to—come.

TERRENCE. Sure and my thoughts have been winging to you a thousand times—but I've been a bird of passage—with never a chance to rest—until last night.

KITTY. And when my message came today?

TERRENCE. I was just leaving—for you. (*KITTY smiles.*) Don't you believe it, don't you *know* it, Dream Princess?

KITTY (*quietly withdrawing her hands*). Oh, Adventure—it's all very strange, isn't it? Sometimes I wonder if *you're* real—if *I'm* real. Perhaps it would all be different, had it happened—some other way—some everyday way.

TERRENCE. But it didn't.

KITTY. No—it didn't—and I'm glad. (*After a pause.*) Adventure?

TERRENCE (*eagerly*). I'm a listening to every word of you, Dream Princess. (*Comes closer.*)

KITTY. I believe fate sent you to me that night.

TERRENCE. Sure and it was something very wonderful and beautiful—why call it fate?

KITTY. Because today—there came to me—oh, so strangely and unexpectedly—what you've been waiting for—for years. Tell me—was the name of the man who has escaped you—whom you have been hunting—George Mason?

TERRENCE. It was—*it was!* Oh, Dream Princess, don't tell me, that I've lost him again.

KITTY. He's here—in this very city. He's wealthy—prominent—influential—and he bears another name. (*As he turns away.*) Tell me, what is it? (*Goes to him.*)

TERRENCE. Just the memory of a broken, disheartened man who had lost—everything—through the treachery of one whom he thought his friend. Oh, Dream Princess, it's been a bitter memory—and one which has never left me—and now—*now*—(*takes note from pocket*). Read that! The note that the traitor left my father—that has never been apart from me. (*Crosses to L. 2 E.*) 'Tis a cruel note—a hard note—ah, I've been living for this very hour when I

could hand it back to him—when I could—(*his face darkens*).

KITTY (*hurrying to him*). Don't—don't—Adventure—it isn't like you. (*Turns and walks to chair back of desk and sits.*)

TERRENCE (*crossing at R. of desk to her*). And I should not be thrusting my dark moods upon you, Dream Princess—(*Sits on desk.*) Will you tell me how you found—my enemy?

KITTY. Through one who calls herself Fredericka Farr.

TERRENCE (*in surprise*). Fredericka!

KITTY. You know her?

TERRENCE. Faith and we played together when we were children.

KITTY. Perhaps it isn't the same one—

TERRENCE. My Fredericka has hair like sunshine, eyes as blue as the sky—and a jolly smile that makes sunshine even when the rain is a-falling!

KITTY (*haughtily*). Oh, *has* she! Well, I'd never recognize her from that description.

TERRENCE (*leaning toward her*). But Dream Princess, she isn't a part of the world *we* know—she can never rise beyond the whirlwind of the day's inconstant things—she hasn't the understanding of you, the soul of you—and the sweetness of you.

KITTY (*suspiciously*). But you've seen her—many times. I heard her say so.

TERRENCE (*rising*). Faith and what would you be expecting me to do when I pass her—ride on and never give her a lift? (*Softly.*) Go on with the story, Dream Princess. (*Sits on desk again.*)

KITTY (*mollified*). Well—Miss Farr—*your* Fredericka—is a confederate of Henry Carter—and Henry Carter is trying to gain possession of the *Clarion*.

TERRENCE (*quickly*). Henry Carter—the political candidate?

KITTY. Not Henry Carter—but George Mason.

TERRENCE. Are you sure of this?

KITTY. Sure—I heard it—right here.

TERRENCE (*rising*). Then they mustn't escape me—they—(*Crosses back of her to C.*)

KITTY (*rising*). Don't worry, Adventure. Ted is watching them for me. (*Comes down R.*)

TERRENCE. Ted—and who is Ted?

KITTY. Ted is connected with the paper; he's a very old—and a very dear friend.

TERRENCE (*quietly*). You never told me about him.

KITTY. There are many things I haven't told you—Adventure. I haven't known you long enough.

TERRENCE. So—it's your friend's office—and your friend's paper—I was wondering why you chose this place to meet me. Now, I understand. (*Takes hat from typewriter.*)

KITTY (*laughingly*). I don't think you do. I chose this place because my home is too far away—and—Ted is the office boy!

TERRENCE (*starting toward her*). Dream Princess!

KITTY (*crossing to L.*). Wait, Adventure—for this is where I call Mr. Dunbar, the owner of the paper—you must tell your story to him and—(*Hesitates and comes back.*) Oh, Adventure, I hate to be introducing you to other people—it's like tearing down the walls of our own little world and opening it to strangers.

TERRENCE (*softly*). Dream Princess, do you really think that anyone can tear down the walls of our world—that—(*Takes hand.*)

KITTY (*rushing away to L. U. E.*). Mac! Phyl!

Enter MACDONALD and PHYLLIS L. U. E.

PHYLLIS. Why Kitty, what is the matter? (*Comes to C.*)

KITTY (*at L. 2 E.*). My sister, Phyllis, Mr. Donovan—(*TERRENCE and PHYLLIS greet each other.*)—and Mr. Dunbar—(*As they clasp hands.*) Faith and it's the Scotch and the Irish a-meeting! (*MACDONALD crosses to desk.*) Listen Mac—Mr. Donovan has a story—a very wonderful story—and—(*TERRENCE walks to R. 2 E.*).

BURTON (*in outside hall*). Dunbar! Dunbar. Where are you?

Enter BURTON at R. U. E. in great excitement.

BURTON. The machinery has been tampered with—the presses are useless. We're done for—ruined—

MACDONALD. *Stop!* When did this happen?

BURTON. Nobody knows—but it's the end of everything for us.

MACDONALD. Never! *Never!* Mathews, get the stuff together.

BURTON. But Dunbar—the thing's impossible. Give up for the present—wait until—

MACDONALD. Nothing is impossible! We'll buy new presses—we'll meet all emergencies—we'll win in spite of everything. *Give up?* Why man—we've just begun to fight!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE: *Same as ACT I. Curtain rises on JOHN seated R. of table; KITTY L. of table; PHYLLIS on settee. TED is standing back of table and CARTER is standing at C.*

TED. And that's all, Mr. Harlan. After Dwyer had promised to break the machinery so that the presses wouldn't work, Miss Farr and Mr. Carter left him—and—then—all of a sudden, Dwyer turned back and saw me. Honest, Miss Kitty, I couldn't help his catching me—he's bigger—and—

KITTY. Of course you couldn't Ted. What happened next?

TED. He locked me up—and I stayed there—hours and hours and hours. And when he let me out—'twas too late to save the presses.

CARTER (*angrily*). And it's for this trumped up story of an office boy that you dragged me out here.

JOHN. You forget, Mr. Carter,—it was your own suggestion that we come here to interview Mr. Dunbar.

CARTER. And where is Dunbar?

JOHN. I explained to you that exhaustion, anxiety and a slight accident to his hand demanded a good night's rest. We brought him out here to be quiet and when you insisted upon accompanying me, I did not promise that he would be awake.

CARTER. Then he must be awakened.

JOHN. That is unnecessary. Miss Aldrich and I represent his interests.

CARTER. Then, perhaps, you will see that your paper denies this story. It is being circulated in the city—and—

KITTY (*interrupting*). Wait a moment, Mr. Carter. I happened to be in the *Clarion* office when you met Miss Farr, yesterday. I overheard enough of the conversation to learn that she is acting under your orders.

CARTER. I know Miss Farr only as a reporter upon the *Clarion*.

KITTY. But a reporter who reports to you.

JOHN. All of which, Mr. Carter, explains the ease with which you timed your blows upon the paper.

CARTER. I believe that it was in the office of the *Clarion* that I heard the expression "All is fair in love—and war and politics." Even should these things with which you charge me be true, I have done them—in self defense.

JOHN. Then this is all you have to say, Mr. Carter?

CARTER. All I have to say. Any other communication I shall make to Dunbar himself. (*Turns as if to leave.*)

JOHN (*rising*). One moment, please. (*To TED.*) Will you call Mr Donovan?

Exit TED at R. entering almost immediately followed by
TERRENCE.

JOHN. You know Mr. Donovan, I believe? (*TED stands back of table.*)

CARTER. I do not.

TERRENCE (*crossing to him*). Perhaps it's not myself, but my name that you're remembering, Mr. Mason.

CARTER. What new nonsense is this? (*Turns aside.*)

JOHN. Fifteen years ago, in a little town whose name might be familiar to you—a certain George Mason played

a dishonorable trick upon an unsuspecting partner—and disappeared. It would not be an attractive story if published in connection with a political candidate, would it, Mr. Carter?

CARTER. Why are you telling me all this? Why should the story interest me?

TERRENCE. Because you are George Mason—and because my father was your partner.

CARTER. Do you suppose I'll submit to such a ridiculous accusation? Why you have no grounds for such a statement—no proof—

KITTY. Only the fact that I heard you acknowledge to Miss Farr that you were George Mason.

CARTER. Hearsay is no evidence. Why you can't verify your charge by a single scrap of paper.

TERRENCE. And if it's the scrap of paper you're needing—I've been carrying it with me for many a day. It proved a death warrant fifteen years ago—and now it's coming back to the hand that sent it. (*Takes out note and hands it to CARTER.*)

JOHN (*coming to front of table*). You see, Mr. Carter, there is no use in denial. We have our proofs, we can obtain others at any time. What are you going to do about it?

CARTER (*furiously*). So *that's* your plan—to print this story in your paper—to ruin me—to—(*Is about to thrust paper into pocket when TERRENCE seizes it.*)

JOHN. The *Clarion* is no advocate of blackmail. Mr. Dunbar's orders are that no word of this shall find its way into our pages.

CARTER (*after a pause*). Then—what are your terms?

Enter MACDONALD down the stairs unseen by CARTER.

JOHN. First—that you fully compensate the *Clarion* for what financial loss it has suffered through you. Second—that you announce in tomorrow's paper your withdrawal from the political race, together with the request that votes intended for you shall be transferred to the candidate we support. (*Turns.*) That's all—from us. Mr. Donovan will make his own demands. (*Returns to chair R. of table.*)

CARTER (*turning to* TERRENCE). And—you?

TERRENCE. Six weeks ago, I had only one thought—the black thought of revenge,—a bitter revenge that would mean your ruin, your disgrace and even your death. I wanted you to struggle—and to suffer—as my dad had done in the few weary years you left him—I wanted to gloat over your misfortune—to be happy in your downfall. (*Glances at* KITTY.) But now—it's different. For there's something way down in my heart a-telling me that vengeance isn't for me to give—that a greater power than our poor human agency is back of everything in the world. The mills of the gods grind slowly, George Mason; conscience may become a torture; and often, remembrance is a bitter thing. I ask no other revenge. (*Crosses and stands back of* KITTY.)

MACDONALD (*coming to* CARTER). I'm sorry to be so late for the conference, Mr. Carter. Naturally I expected to meet you at the office—but since it has happened this way, matters have been satisfactorily arranged without me. You accept the terms?

CARTER (*as he walks slowly to the door at* L. 2 E.). I accept the terms. (*Exit* L. 2 E.)

MACDONALD. It was a fine and generous thing to do, Donovan, and—(*Puts hand on* TERRENCE's *shoulder.*)

Enter MRS. BRECKINRIDGE *at* R.

MRS. B. (*crossing to* R. 2 E.). Well, has that man gone? I can't understand why he came here when we've never been introduced and have never recognized him. (*Sits herself.*)

PHYLLIS (*patiently*). Aunt Alice, I told you that it was merely a business call.

MRS. B. Then it should have been made in an office. If the home is to be invaded in this fashion, where is the line to be drawn? (*Seeing* MACDONALD.) Why MacDonald, I didn't know you were up. How did you sleep?

MACDONALD. Like a top.

MRS. B. And your hand?

MACDONALD. Ever so much better.

MRS. B. (*rising*). Then I'll have Belinda make your coffee right away.

MACDONALD (*detaining her*). Please don't—for I have just enough time to thank you all for the rest cure—and to get to the city.

MRS. B. But, MacDonald! The Castlemans never allow a guest to depart without breakfast.

MACDONALD. Then let's call it a postponed breakfast—for I'll come again.

PHYLLIS. Can't you really stay, Mac? Mr. Ross is doing all that can be done and—

MACDONALD. But I must see the banks. All morning my mind has been juggling rows and rows of figures—and the sooner I settle them, the better. You'll be down, Jack?

JOHN. As soon as I confer with—your partner. (*Nods toward PHYLLIS.*)

MACDONALD (*to PHYLLIS*). And you?

PHYLLIS (*rising*). As soon as I finish with—Jack.

MACDONALD. Such conspirators! (*Turns to TED.*) Well, Sherlock Holmes, you're coming with me, aren't you? How would you like to help me run the paper?

TED (*coming to MACDONALD*). Please, Mr. Dunbar, if you don't mind—(*Hesitates.*)

MACDONALD. Yes? (*KITTY and TERRENCE cross to back of settee.*)

TED. I'd ruther be—a detect-uff!

KITTY. You're a bully good one now, Ted.

TED. If only Dwyer hadn't pinched me—

MACDONALD (*at L. 2 E.*). Come along!

TED (*waving to KITTY*). Good-bye, Dr. Watson! (*Exeunt TED and MACDONALD L. 2 E.*)

JOHN (*crossing and taking PHYLLIS' arm*). Would you mind transferring Mac's coffee to me, Phyl? (*They start toward the dining room.*)

MRS. B. Phyllis?

PHYLLIS. Yes?

MRS. B. (*who has been rummaging in table drawer*). Have you moved my monkey wrench?

PHYLLIS. Why should I move your monkey wrench?

MRS. B. I keep it here in the drawer so that it's handy—I've *always* kept it here—and it belonged to your grandfather Castleman.

PHYLLIS. Ask Belinda. (*Exeunt PHYLLIS and JOHN at R.*)

MRS. B. (*turning*). Katherine! Have you seen that monkey wrench?

KITTY. Not—lately. Do you need it?

MRS. B. (*peevishly*). Would I be hunting it, if I didn't?

TERRENCE (*whispering to KITTY*). Sure and maybe one of the screws in the family tree is loose. (*Catches up KITTY'S coat which is over back of settee.*)

MRS. B. I'm attached to that monkey wrench—it's almost like an heirloom. Why I never expected it to go out of the family!

TERRENCE (*as he holds coat for KITTY*). Faith and I'm hoping it never will—go out of the family!

MRS. B. (*as KITTY puts on her coat*). Katherine, where are you going?

KITTY. Out.

MRS. B. I inferred as much. It isn't kind of you to be so noncommittal—especially when I'm all worked up over the loss of the monkey wrench. (*Plaintively.*) It belonged to your grandfather Castleman.

KITTY (*advancing*). I meant to say that I'm going out in Mr. Donovan's car, auntie.

MRS. B. (*pushing her aside at L.*). Katherine, do you know anything about the family of this young man?

KITTY. When I'm with *him*, I never think of his ancestors.

MRS. B. But *family* was a great point with the Castleman's—and—

KITTY. Auntie, if all his family were washerwomen, it wouldn't make the least bit of difference. (*Meanwhile TERRENCE tiptoes to the table, opens the drawer, and is replacing the monkey wrench when KITTY turns. He holds up a warning finger—then crosses to MRS. BRECKINRIDGE.*)

TERRENCE (*holding out his hand*). Sure and I'll be taking just as good care of her as if it were yourself that was a-trusting yourself to me. (MRS. BRECKINRIDGE *takes his hand reluctantly*.)

BELINDA *enters R. as TERRENCE and KITTY withdraw at L. 2 E.*

MRS. B. Belinda, have you seen my monkey wrench?

BELINDA. Aint seen it since you put it in that there table drawer.

MRS. B. (*returning to table*). Well, I've looked through this table drawer a dozen times—and—(*As she discovers the missing monkey wrench, she shrieks, and points dramatically*.) Belinda!

BELINDA (*excitedly*). What is it, Mrs. Breckinridge? A bloody dagger?

MRS. B. (*hysterically*). It's—it's the monkey wrench! (*Holds it up*.)

BELINDA (*in disgust*). Just the monkey wrench? Why, that ain't nothin'! Lady Gwen-do-line found a gory glove onct when she was lookin' in a table drawer!

MRS. B. But I took everything out this very morning—and it wasn't there—and now—now—oh, I don't understand!

BELINDA (*in a loud whisper*). Ghosties, Mrs. Breckinridge—ghosties! (*Points*.) And that there image is the worstest of all! Just see how he's watchin' you—and grin-nin' at you—and—

MRS. B. (*regaining her composure*). Belinda! That will do. (*Hurries toward dining room*.) Phyllis! Phyllis! I've found the monkey wrench! It belonged to your grandfather Castleman, and (*Exit R.*)

BELINDA (*standing before image*). I ain't afraid of you, you sassy thing—I ain't afraid to slap you! (CAROLYN *comes slowly down stairs, BELINDA spies her*.) Why, Miss Carol! I didn't know you was home! And you sweep down them stairs for all the world like the Lady Gwendoline!

CAROLYN. I'm having a birthday and a holiday all rolled

into one, Belinda. (*Opens box of roses which she carries.*) Aren't they lovely?

BELINDA (*excitedly*). Miss Carol, have you an unknown worshipper at your shrine?

CAROLYN. Mercy, no! Unknown worshippers have gone out of style. These are from a friend—just a very good friend—Mr. Harlan.

BELINDA. He's in *there*—with Miss Phyl. (*Points to R.*)

CAROLYN. Is he? Do you mind taking out this box, Belinda? (*Takes flowers from box which BELINDA carries out R.*)

Enter JOHN at R.

CAROLYN (*at back of table*). I was wishing for you—how did you know?

JOHN (*coming to chair R. of table*). I guessed it—and the sight of Belinda and the flower box made me pretty certain that you were somewhere near by. (*As he takes both hands.*) Happy birthday.

CAROLYN (*motioning to flowers*). You never forget, do you Jack?

JOHN. How could I?

CAROLYN. In a few more years I'll *make* you forget. There comes a time when we don't keep track of birthdays. (*Pins rose on his coat.*) Here's one of the beauties for you.

JOHN. You can be delightfully feminine Carol, when you want to be.

CAROLYN. Did you say feminine or feminist? (*Sits R. of table.*)

JOHN. You know what I said.—(*Sits on edge of table at her left.*)

CAROLYN (*laughing*). Same old views, Jack?

JOHN. Same old views. What about you since those days when you chose a career instead of me?

CAROLYN. I've succeeded—haven't I? I've made something of a name for myself—I'm financially independent—and I've had a tilt at some of the big questions that have come my way.

JOHN (*leaning forward*). But—are you satisfied?

CAROLYN (*lightly*). What a serious question to ask—on one's birthday.

JOHN. Can't one answer questions on a birthday?

CAROLYN. It depends upon the question. (*Quickly*.) Come—tell me about the *Clarion* troubles.

JOHN. I'll tell nobody's troubles—except my own.

CAROLYN. What troubles can a successful young lawyer have?

JOHN (*softly*). Guess. (*Rises and stands by her*.)

CAROLYN. I never guess—especially on a birthday. I like to be sure of things. (*Taking the flowers*.) Come, help me arrange them. (*Rises*.)

JOHN (*as he selects a bud, a half blown and a full blown rose*). How do you like the combination? (*Holds them out*.)

CAROLYN (*as she arranges roses in vase*). Lovely.—Three degrees, so to speak.

JOHN. There's a pretty story about the three degrees. Want to hear it?

CAROLYN. Surely.

JOHN. A certain lover sent his lady three roses, with the following request: If she felt friendship alone, she was to keep the bud; if he might hope for more, she was to choose the half blown flower—and if she could give him the love he wished, she was to wear the perfect blossom. (*Hands the roses to CAROLYN*.)

Enter PHYLLIS at R., JOHN hastily withdraws to L.

PHYLLIS. So you're paying your respects to the birthday lady! I wondered where you had disappeared. (*As she sees the roses*.) Jack's roses? (*Perches on arm of chair L. of table*.)

CAROLYN. Jack's roses.

PHYLLIS. He always remembers, doesn't he?

CAROLYN. Always. (*As she pins on the rosebud*.) And he quite deserves all the friendship I can give him. (*Turns to PHYLLIS*.) Come, tell me about the *Clarion*. (*Sits R. of table*.)

PHYLLIS. Carter accepted our terms.

CAROLYN. Good. Then — financially — the troubles are over.

PHYLLIS. Not a bit of it. Even if Carter makes full compensation—where is the ready money to come from? There's no particular income at present—and without an income a newspaper is rather helpless—and hopeless.

CAROLYN. I wonder if I could buy some stock in the paper?

JOHN (*gloomily*). No, you couldn't I tried—and failed—thanks to Mac's everlasting conscience.

PHYLLIS. What's the matter, Jack? You look as if you've lost your last friend.

JOHN (*more gloomily*). On the contrary, I've just made one. (*Leans on mantel, looking at CAROLYN.*)

CAROLYN (*ignoring him*). Poor old Mac! Who ever thought, a year ago, that he would be worrying about money. I've never before been brought so near to a demonstration of the uncertainty of riches.

PHYLLIS. But the very uncertainty of riches will bring him a certainty of manhood.

CAROLYN. And he'll succeed—he *must*. (*She rises and adds the half blown rose to the bud with a glance at the despondent JOHN.*) While there's life, there's hope. (*JOHN half starts to her.*)

PHYLLIS (*rising*). Oh, I wish I could help him—I wish I could help him! (*Catches CAROLYN by the arm and points.*) Look, Carol—look at the image! Don't its eyes seem to follow me? Doesn't it seem—alive?

CAROLYN. *Phyl!* How ridiculous! You're tired and nervous.

PHYLLIS. Perhaps I am—I won't look at it again. It's silly to say such things when I've lived with it all my life—but lately—it seems to be trying to tell me something—it seems to have cast an uncanny spell upon me.

CAROLYN (*thoughtfully*). The spell of the image—is it an evil spell I wonder?

PHYLLIS. It's a spell that must be broken—I'm sure of that. (*Sits L. of table and leans head on hand.*)

CAROLYN. I'm sure you and Jack have much to talk about—so I'll leave you. (*Moves toward window.*)

PHYLLIS. Don't. We need all the ideas and suggestions we can get.

CAROLYN. But a third person is always a handicap. (*As she reaches the window she turns toward JOHN and adds the full blown rose.*) It's so warm that I'll take a bit of a walk around the yard. If you wish to consult me—just call. (*Exit at window.*)

PHYLLIS (*thoughtfully pondering, with her eyes on the floor*). All right. Jack, do you think it would be right to consider a temporary cut in salaries? (*No answer. She glances up at JOHN who stands at window as if spellbound, looking after CAROLYN.*) Jack! (*Without a word, JOHN turns and hurries after CAROLYN.*) Oh—oh—what is the matter? (*Rises and looks around at the image in consternation.*) The spell of the image! (*Bell rings—she starts nervously.*) Everything gets on my nerves!

Enter BELINDA at R.

BELINDA. Shall I be answering the door, Miss Phyl?

PHYLLIS. Why, of course.

BELINDA (*as she passes the image*). I ain't afraid of you, you sassy thing! Just you wait until I slap your mouth (*Goes out L. 2 E.—Returning almost immediately with MRS. VAN ALSTYNE—and then passing out R.*)

PHYLLIS (*hurrying to MRS. V. A.*). Why, Aunt Letitia! What fun to have a morning call.

Enter MRS. BRECKINRIDGE at R.

MRS. V. A. I've come on business, Phyllis—strictly business—and I'm glad to find you here—for Alice Breckinridge wouldn't know a business proposition if she were introduced to it.

MRS. B. (*haughtily as she advances*). Good morning, Letitia—I couldn't help overhearing your last remark. Pardon me if I say that I can't see what connection I have with any business proposition.

MRS. V. A. (*gazing through lorgnette*). You haven't Alice, you haven't.

MRS. B. The Castleman girls were not educated in a commercial way—

MRS. V. A. And the Aldrich girls were.

MRS. B. (*meditatively*). Dear me! It seems but yesterday that the Castleman carriage stopped at your father's little store—and we children watched you counting pennies at the desk.

MRS. V. A. (*angrily*). Counting *pennies*! Well if my poor dear brother had had a wife who indulged in such exercise, his children wouldn't now be living in an out-of-date, out-of-repair house, that—

MRS. B. (*freezingly*). Letitia! (*Sits L. of table.*)

PHYLLIS (*hastily*). Come now Aunt Letitia—let's not spoil the morning by any dispute. (MRS. V. A. *sits on settee.*) It's so seldom that we see you. (*Seats herself R. of Mrs. V. A.*)

MRS. V. A. And you wouldn't see me today, if I hadn't business. I'll come straight to the point, Phyllis. (*With a glance at Mrs. B.*) Fortunately I have no trashy sentimentality about *me*.

MRS. B. (*sweetly*). Fortunately and naturally, Letitia. A family which has no historic setting, no traditions and (*glancing at portrait*) no international alliances, can't be expected to possess the finer sensibilities.

MRS. V. A. (*using lorgnette*). Alice Castleman Breckinridge! What are you insinuating?

PHYLLIS (*hastily*). Now—now—Aunt Letitia. You didn't come here to argue I'm sure.

MRS. V. A. I came to discuss your financial situation, my dear.

MRS. B. Phyllis! Surely you don't intend to discuss finances outside of the family circle.

MRS. V. A. (*angrily*). Outside of the *family circle*! Will you kindly explain why a father's sister is excluded from the family circle?

PHYLLIS (*nervously*). Nonsense, Aunt Letitia. Aunt Alice never meant *that*!

MRS. B. (*sharply*). How do you know what I mean, Phyllis?

PHYLLIS (*desperately*). Let's have the business.

MRS. B. Phyllis, for the first time in its history, this house has been used as a place of vulgar commercialism. Your grandfather Castleman used to say—"Leave business at the office—don't drag it into the sacred confines of the home." (*Wipes her eyes.*)

PHYLLIS. Go on, Aunt Letitia.

MRS. V. A. I've found out all about your money difficulties. (*As PHYLLIS protests.*) Oh, no matter, *how*—and it has worried me so that I felt I *must* talk it out with you. (*Glancing at MRS. B.*) If your funds had been properly managed—

PHYLLIS. Oh, you mustn't worry about us for a moment. I'm reporting on the *Clarion*, and Kitty—

MRS. V. A. (*interrupting*). How do you think you two girls can meet emergencies? What will you do?

PHYLLIS. Do the best we can—and—meanwhile—improve our opportunities.

MRS. V. A. But *you* are not improving your opportunities.

PHYLLIS. In what way, Aunt Letitia?

MRS. V. A. You should marry MacDonald Dunbar.

PHYLLIS. But suppose I don't love MacDonald Dunbar.

MRS. V. A. My dear, in this day and age it's very easy to fall in love with a man who is able to take care of you.

PHYLLIS (*thoughtfully*). But suppose MacDonald isn't able.

MRS. V. A. Don't be ridiculous, Phyllis.

PHYLLIS. Haven't you heard that he's lost his money?

MRS. V. A. (*in surprise*). Lost his *money*?

PHYLLIS. Absolutely. Bad investments.

MRS. V. A. (*excitedly*). Are you sure?

PHYLLIS. So sure that I think I could marry him now much more easily than in the days of his bank account.

MRS. V. A. (*sharply*). Don't do anything foolish, Phyllis. MacDonald is a pleasant and attractive young man but I consider him hardly desirable from the standpoint of matrimony.

PHYLLIS (*slyly*). Matrimony? You mean matter-o'-money, Aunt Letitia.

MRS. V. A. (*to herself*). Well—well—so Dunbar has lost his money! This does complicate everything. (*Pauses.*) Now Phyllis—Mr. Van Alstyne and I are willing to advance a sufficient sum to you girls—

MRS. B. (*haughtily*). Why, Letitia Aldrich Van Alstyne!

PHYLLIS (*rising*). Oh, no, Aunt Letitia, we couldn't let you do *that*! If we really need it, we'll come to you and—

MRS. V. A. I had an idea that some of the Castleman foolishness would stand in the way of good hard common sense—so I have a second proposition to make. Mr. Van Alstyne and I will buy this place from you and fit it up as a wayside inn for motorists. It's a good distance from town—and (*looks around*) with all this junk, we ought to make it fairly attractive.

MRS. B. (*hysterically*). Sell the house—oh, Phyllis—Sell the *house*!

PHYLLIS (*going to MRS. B.*). Oh, we couldn't do that—we really couldn't, Aunt Letitia—not until we're forced to do so. (*Laughingly.*) You see, somewhere in this house, Phyllis Castleman has hidden the string of pearls which rightfully belongs to me. I couldn't let it fall into the hands of strangers.

MRS. V. A. Phyllis Aldrich, do you believe that foolish tale? And how do you know they weren't paste? And how—

Enter BELINDA at R.

BELINDA. Please, Miss Phyl, I ain't had no chance this morning, to dust this here room.

PHYLLIS. Then do it right now. Aunt Letitia come upstairs and lay off your wraps—and stay to lunch. (*As she protests.*) Oh, you *must*—(*takes her by arm*). Aunt Alice insists and—(*They go slowly up the stairway*, MRS. BRECK-

INRIDGE *following haughtily. While they mount the stairs BELINDA dusts almost immediately making her way to the image.*)

BELINDA (*as she dusts*). Still grinnin', ain't you, smarty? Well I ain't afraid of you—I ain't afraid of you! I'll show you. (*Slaps image on mouth.*) There! (*The image totters, and as BELINDA catches it, she touches the spring and the pearls fall out. She stands speechless for a moment—then shrieks wildly.*) Oh—oh—the pearls—Miss Phyllis—the pearls! (*PHYLLIS hurries to her, leaving MRS. B. and MRS. V. A. on stairway. For a moment she gazes bewilderedly, then kneels and lifts the pearls.*)

PHYLLIS. The pearls—the pearls, after all these years—and in the image. (*Gazes at portrait.*) Oh, Phyllis Castleman you have given me the only thing on earth that can bring me happiness! (*She rises suddenly and rushes to window.*) John! John! (*Holding out the pearls to the aunts.*) See, Aunt Alice—see, Aunt Letitia. The Castleman pearls, the Castleman heritage, the Castleman deliverer!

As JOHN enters.

PHYLLIS. Take them, John—they've been hidden all these years in the image—take them—(*Thrusts them in his hand.*) Sell them—(*As he starts to speak.*) Oh, don't question me, don't question me—but sell them, sell them—and when you hold the money in your hand, buy me half the Clarion! (*Frenziedly.*) Do you hear—do you hear? Half the Clarion! Go, go! (*Pushes him away, then hurries to front of stage and falls on her knees in front of image.*) Oh, you taunted me, you laughed at me, you cast your spell upon me, because in your wicked heart there lay the treasure that was mine, the treasure that could bring me the beautiful things that make life worth while! But your mystery has been solved,—your spell has been broken! I'm free—free—free!

(*Curtain is lowered a moment to indicate a passage of some hours.*)

Curtain rises on clear stage. In a moment, KITTY enters

from window, throws off her coat and walks nervously around, finally seating herself L. of table. In a moment comes the low sound of an auto horn; she listens attentively. Then a knock at the window is heard. She rises and goes to window.

KITTY. Who's—who's there?

TERRENCE (*from outside*). Just a somebody whose car has gone back on him and who would be asking for the loan of another passenger.

KITTY *opens window*. TERRENCE *enters*.

TERRENCE. And have you been waiting long for me, Dream Princess?

KITTY (*sitting on settee*). I think I have—always—been waiting for you, Adventure.

TERRENCE (*whispering*). Then—come! (*Throws gloves and cap on settee.*)

KITTY. Come—where?

TERRENCE (*pointing to window*). Away — away — far away into the magic of the moonlit night, with only the friendly stars to bless us and the whispering winds to guide us and a lover's knot of a road to lead us into the Land of Dreams Come True !

KITTY. Terrence!

TERRENCE (*sitting by her*). Ah—listen to me, Kitty darlin'—for at the end of the road there is a quiet little church and a kindly old preacher to help us on our way. And faith, I've been carrying the license and the wedding ring all day.

KITTY. I mustn't listen to you—I couldn't do it—oh, I couldn't!

TERRENCE. Sure and do you think for a minute that I'll be leaving without you? (*Suddenly.*) Or is it that you're wanting an everyday wedding in an everyday church, with everyday people and—an everyday groom?

KITTY. No—no—it isn't that—you know it isn't—but—what will everybody say?

TERRENCE. Faith and is it everybody that counts—or just you and I? (*Softly.*) Just you and I!

KITTY. Oh, Terrence—I want to go—I—(*rises.*)

TERRENCE (*rising, with hat and gloves*). Then be getting your coat—(*Takes KITTY's coat.*)—and when I bring you back you can be telling your story—and tomorrow—(*folds coat around her.*)

KITTY (*eagerly*). Tomorrow?

TERRENCE. We'll be turning our faces toward the little old island across the sea and together we'll be feeling its mystery—and together we'll be sharing the enchantment and the wonder light. (*Pleadingly.*) Come, Kitty?

KITTY (*turning to portrait*). Oh, I don't care what you think, you prim, precise, prunes-and-prisms thing! It's my chance for happiness—it's my romance—my adventure, and all the conventions in the world can't take it from me. (*Turns and holds out her hands.*) Oh, Terrence—Terrence—I'll follow your road even to the end of the day! I'm coming!

TERRENCE (*taking her hands*). Dream Princess! (*They go out window.*)

Enter PHYLLIS down stairway.

PHYLLIS. Kit, will you come here a moment? (*Pauses.*) Kitty! Where are you? (*Goes to door at R.*) Kitty!

Bell rings—she hurries to door, L. & E. Enter MACDONALD.

PHYLLIS. Oh, Mac—it's you! I thought maybe Kitty—

MACDONALD. Kitty's off with Donovan—I passed them. Jove, but I'm tired! Weren't you expecting me? (*Sinks on settee.*)

PHYLLIS. Of course I was. (*Crosses to chair L. of table.*) Sit here—be comfortable—and rest. (*MACDONALD rises and crosses to chair L. of table. PHYLLIS brings stool and sits at his left.*)

MACDONALD. I don't believe I've ever been so tired in all my life—and I know I've never been so happy. Phyl—my luck's turned.

PHYLLIS. Tell me about it.

MACDONALD. First of all came the return of Carter's advertising—then, the new presses with money to pay for them—and along with everything else, the prospect of good days ahead.

PHYLLIS (*after a pause*). Is that—all?

MACDONALD. I've saved the best till the last. (*Impressively.*) Phyl, I've sold half of the *Clarion*!

PHYLLIS. Sold it! Is that good news? (*Leans forward.*)

MACDONALD. It wouldn't be if I hadn't needed the money. But—as it is—it straightens out my difficulties and gives me a chance to make good.

PHYLLIS. Then I'm glad. Who bought it?

MACDONALD. A mysterious person who refused to give his name—purchased it through Jack.

PHYLLIS. Have you no suspicion?

MACDONALD. Not the slightest. (*Sighs.*) It's been an exciting day. (*Leans back in chair.*)

PHYLLIS. I've had an exciting day, too.

MACDONALD. What's happened?

PHYLLIS. The pearls have been found by Belinda.

MACDONALD (*sitting up straight*). What! Not the pearls we've hunted for years?

PHYLLIS. The same. (*Points.*) There—in the image.

MACDONALD. Sounds like a fairy story. doesn't it? (*Leans toward her.*) Phyl, you don't know how glad I am—for this means an end of all your little worries and—

PHYLLIS. I've sold my treasure and have invested the proceeds already.

MACDONALD. *Already!* Isn't that rather hasty work, Phyl? You'd better take time to consider.

PHYLLIS (*laughing*). Oh Mac, Mac, you dear old stupid! Can't you guess?

MACDONALD (*dazed*). Phyl! You don't mean—

PHYLLIS. Oh, I do, I do! I wanted to have my own work—I wanted to help you—(*Suddenly as he turns away.*) Why Mac—aren't you glad?

MACDONALD. Give me time to realize the situation.

PHYLLIS (*after a long pause*). Mac—once upon a time you asked me to marry you.

MACDONALD (*grimly*). I did!

PHYLLIS. And later on—you said you'd never ask me again.

MACDONALD. I meant it. I never shall.

PHYLLIS. Well, then—Mac, will you marry me?

MACDONALD. *Phyl!*

PHYLLIS. For if you don't—I'll marry you!

MACDONALD. You're not saying this in jest?

PHYLLIS. *In jest?* It's the most serious thing in life to me. For everything's changed since you became a man. I want you—I need you—and I just can't see how I'm going to do without you!

MACDONALD. You won't have the chance. (*Places his arm around her.*) *Phyl!*

PHYLLIS (*rising*). Wait a minute, Mac! I haven't changed my views on economic independence. We're partners—we'll work our paper together—and we'll start right. (*Rushes to mantel and catches up her purse.*) Here's half the cost of a wedding ring! (*He rushes to her.*)

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Billy's Mishap, 20 min.	2	3
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Case Against Casey, 40 min.	23	
Country Justice, 15 min.	8	
Cow that Kicked Chicago, 20 m.	3	2
Divided Attentions, 35 min.	1	4
Dude in a Cyclone, 20 min.	4	2
Family Strike, 20 min.	3	3
First-Class Hotel, 20 min.	4	
For Love and Honor, 20 min.	2	1
Fudge and a Burglar, 15 min.	5	
Fun in Photo Gallery, 30 min.	6	10
Great Medical Dispensary, 30 m.	6	
Great Pumpkin Case, 30 min.	12	
Hans' Von Smash, 30 min.	4	3
I'm Not Meself at All, 25 min.	3	2
Initiating a Granger, 25 min.	8	
Irish Linen Peddler, 40 min.	3	3
Is the Editor In? 20 min.	4	2
Kansas Immigrants, 20 min.	5	1
Men Not Wanted, 30 min.	8	
Mike Donovan's Courtship, 15 m.	1	3
Mother Goose's Goslings, 30 m.	7	9
Mrs. Jenkins' Brilliant Idea, 35m.	8	
Mrs. Stubbins' Book Agent, 30 m.	3	2
My Wife's Relations, 1 hr.	4	6
Not a Man in the House, 40 m.	5	
Pair of Lunatics, 20 min.	1	1
Patsy O'Wang, 35 min.	4	3
Pat, the Apothecary, 35 min.	6	2
Persecuted Dutchman, 30 min.	6	3
Regular Fix, 35 min.	6	4
Second Childhood, 15 min.	2	2
Shadows, 35 min.	2	2
Sing a Song of Seniors, 30 min.	7	
Taking Father's Place, 30 min.	5	3
Taming a Tiger, 30 min.	3	
That Rascal Pat, 30 min.	3	2
Those Red Envelopes, 25 min.	4	4
Too Much of a Good Thing, 45 min.	3	6
Turn Him Out, 35 min.	3	2
Two Aunts and a Photo, 20 m.	4	
Two Gentlemen in a Fix, 15 m.	2	
Two Ghosts in White, 20 min.	8	
Two of a Kind, 40 min.	2	3
Uncle Dick's Mistake, 20 min.	3	2
Wanted a Correspondent, 45 m.	4	4
Wanted a Hero, 20 min.	1	1

	M.	F.
Wide Enough for Two, 45 min.	5	2
Wrong Baby, 25 min.	8	
Yankee Peddler, 1 hr.	7	3

VAUDEVILLE SKETCHES, MONOLOGUES, ETHIOPIAN PLAYS.

Ax'in' Her Father, 25 min.	2	3
Booster Club of Blackville, 25 m.	10	
Breakfast Food for Two, 20 m.	1	1
Cold Finish, 15 min.	2	1
Colored Honeymoon, 25 min.	2	2
Coon Creek Courtship, 15 min.	1	1
Coming Champion, 20 min.	2	
Coontown Thirteen Club, 25 m.	14	
Counterfeit Bills, 20 min.	1	1
Darktown Fire Brigade, 25 min.	10	
Doings of a Dude, 20 min.	2	1
Dutch Cocktail, 20 min.	2	
For Reform, 20 min.	4	
Fresh Timothy Hay, 20 min.	2	1
Glickman, the Glazier, 25 min.	1	1
Good Mornin' Judge, 35 min.	9	2
Her Hero, 20 min.	1	1
Hey, Rube! 15 min.	1	
Home Run, 15 min.	1	1
Jumbo Jum, 30 min.	4	3
Little Red School House, 20 m.	4	
Love and Lather, 35 min.	3	2
Marriage and After, 10 min.	1	
Memphis Mose, 25 min.	5	1
Mischievous Nigger, 25 min.	4	2
Mistaken Miss, 20 min.	1	1
Mr. and Mrs. Fido, 20 min.	1	1
Oh, Doctor! 30 min.	6	2
One Sweetheart for Two, 20 m.	2	
Oshkosh Next Week, 20 min.	4	
Oyster Stew, 10 min.	2	
Pete Yansen's Gurl's Moder, 10m.	1	
Pickles for Two, 15 min.	2	
Pooh Bah of Peacetown, 35 min.	2	2
Prof. Black's Funnygraph, 15 m.	6	
Sham Doctor, 10 min.	4	2
Si and I, 15 min.	1	
Special Sale, 15 min.	2	
Stage Struck Darry, 10 min.	2	1
Sunny Son of Italy, 15 min.	1	
Time Table, 20 min.	1	1
Tramp and the Actress, 20 min.	1	1
Troubled by Ghosts, 10 min.	4	
Troubles of Rozinski, 15 min.	1	
Two Jay Detectives, 15 min.	3	
Umbrella Mender, 15 min.	2	
Uncle Jeff, 25 min.	5	2
What Happened to Hannah, 15m.	1	1

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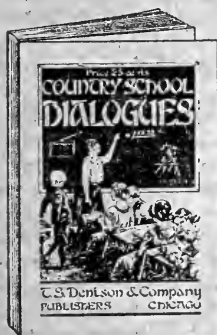
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